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THE HAPPY HEART

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers ?
O sweet content !
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexèd ?
O punishment !
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexèd
To add to golden numbers, golden numbers ?
O sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny !

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring ?
O sweet content !
Swimm'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears ?
O punishment !
Then he that patiently want's burden bears
No burden bears, but is a king, a king !
O sweet content ! O sweet, O sweet content !
Work apace, apace, apace, apace;
Honest labor bears a lovely face;
Then hey nonny nonny, hey nonny nonny !

THOMAS DEKKER

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE genesis of the University Library lies in a compilation of "Little Masterpieces," the first of which were published more than twenty-five years ago. The material included in these volumes was selected by able editors and writers whose experience was great and whose taste was excellent. Out of the "Little Masterpieces" grew a course in liberal education which was known as the Pocket University, and out of the Pocket University grew, finally, the University Library.

The publishers most gratefully acknowledge their debt to the editors who compiled the original volumes: Bliss Perry, Henry van Dyke, Hardin Craig, Thomas L. Masson, Asa Don Dickinson, the late Hamilton W. Mabie, George Iles, the late Dr. Lyman Abbott, and others.

Some of the most important material contained in the Pocket University is, of course, included in the University Library but the sequence has been entirely changed and the scope of the work greatly broadened. Fully two thirds of the material is new and the literature of the world has been ransacked to find appropriate text to fit the basic educational needs of the modern public.

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READING FOR NOVEMBER 16–30

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NOVEMBER 16

"POSSON JONE'"*

TO JULES ST.-ANGE—elegant little heathen—there remained at manhood a remembrance of having been to school, and of having been taught by a stony-headed Capuchin that the world is round—for example, like a cheese. This round world is a cheese to be eaten through, and Jules had nibbled quite into his cheese-world already at twenty-two.

He realized this as he idled about one Sunday morning where the intersection of Royal and Conti streets some seventy years ago formed a central corner of New Orleans. Yes, yes, the trouble was he had been wasteful and honest. He discussed the matter with that faithful friend and confidant, Baptiste, his yellow body-servant. They concluded that, papa's patience and *tante's* pin-money having been gnawed away quite to the rind, there were left open only these few easily-enumerated resorts: to go to work—they shuddered; to join Major Innerarity's filibustering

*Republished from "Old Creole Days," by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

expedition; or else—why not?—to try some games of confidence. At twenty-two one must begin to be something. Nothing else tempted; could that avail? One could but try. It is noble to try; and, besides, they were hungry. If one could "make the friendship" of some person from the country, for instance, with money, not expert at cards or dice, but, as one would say, willing to learn, one might find cause to say some "Hail Marys."

The sun broke through a clearing sky, and Baptiste pronounced it good for luck. There had been a hurricane in the night. The weed-grown tile-roofs were still dripping, and from lofty brick and low adobe walls a rising steam responded to the summer sunlight. Up-street, and across the Rue du Canal, one could get glimpses of the gardens in Faubourg Ste.-Marie standing in silent wretchedness, so many tearful Lucretias, tattered victims of the storm. Short remnants of the wind now and then came down the narrow street in erratic puffs heavily laden with odors of broken boughs and torn flowers, skimmed the little pools of rain-water in the deep ruts of the unpaved street, and suddenly went away to nothing, like a juggler's butterflies or a young man's money.

It was very picturesque, the Rue Royale. The rich and poor met together. The locksmith's swinging key creaked next door to the bank; across the way, crouching, mendicant-like, in the shadow of a great importing-house, was the mud labora-

tory of the mender of broken combs. Light balconies overhung the rows of showy shops and stores open for trade this Sunday morning, and pretty Latin faces of the higher class glanced over their savagely-pronged railings upon the passers below. At some windows hung lace curtains, flannel duds at some, and at others only the scraping and sighing one-hinged shutter groaning toward Paris after its neglectful master.

M. St.-Ange stood looking up and down the street for nearly an hour. But few ladies, only the inveterate mass-goers, were out. About the entrance of the frequent *cafés* the masculine gentility stood leaning on canes, with which now one and now another beckoned to Jules, some even adding pantomimic hints of the social cup.

M. St.-Ange remarked to his servant without turning his head that somehow he felt sure he should soon return those *bons* that the mulatto had lent him.

"What will you do with them?"

"Me!" said Baptiste, quickly; "I will go and see the bull-fight in the Place Congo."

"There is to be a bull-fight? But where is M. Cayetano?"

"Ah, got all his affairs wet in the tornado. Instead of his circus, they are to have a bull-fight—not an ordinary bull-fight with sick horses, but a buffalo-and-tiger fight. I would not miss it——"

Two or three persons ran to the opposite corner, and commenced striking at something with their canes. Others followed. Can M. St.-Ange and

servant, who hasten forward—can the Creoles, Cubans, Spaniards, San Domingo refugees, and other loungers—can they hope it is a fight? They hurry forward. Is a man in a fit? The crowd pours in from the side-streets. Have they killed a so-long snake? Bareheaded shopmen leave their wives, who stand upon chairs. The crowd huddles and packs. Those on the outside make little leaps into the air, trying to be tall.

"What is the matter?"

"Have they caught a real live rat?"

"Who is hurt?" asks someone in English.

"*Personne*," replies a shopkeeper; "a man's hat blow' in the gutter; but he has it now. Jules pick' it. See, that is the man, head and shoulders on top the res'."

"He in the homespun?" asks a second shopkeeper. "Humph! an *Américain*—a West-Floridian; bah!"

"But wait; 'st! he is speaking; listen!"

"To who is he speak——?"

"Sh-sh-sh! to Jules."

"Jules who?"

"Silence, you! To Jules St.-Ange, what howe me a bill since long time. Sh-sh-sh!"

Then the voice was heard.

Its owner was a man of giant stature, with a slight stoop in his shoulders, as if he was making a constant, good-natured attempt to accommodate himself to ordinary doors and ceilings. His bones were those of an ox. His face was marked more by weather than age, and his narrow brow was

bald and smooth. He had instantaneously formed an opinion of Jules St.-Ange, and the multitude of words, most of them lingual curiosities, with which he was rasping the wide-open ears of his listeners, signified, in short, that, as sure as his name was Parson Jones, the little Creole was a "plum gentleman."

M. St.-Ange bowed and smiled, and was about to call attention, by both gesture and speech, to a singular object on top of the still uncovered head, when the nervous motion of the *Américain* anticipated him, as, throwing up an immense hand, he drew down a large roll of bank-notes. The crowd laughed, the West-Floridian joining, and began to disperse.

"Why, that money belongs to Smyrny Church," said the giant.

"You are very dengerous to make your money expose like that, Misty Posson Jone'," said St.-Ange, counting it with his eyes.

The countryman gave a start and smile of surprise.

"How d'dyou know my name was Jones?" he asked; but, without pausing for the Creole's answer, furnished in his reckless way some further specimens of West-Floridian English; and the conciseness with which he presented full intelligence of his home, family, calling, lodging-house, and present and future plans, might have passed for consummate art, had it not been the most run-wild nature. "And I've done been to Mobile, you know, on busi*ness* for Bethesdy Church. It's

the on'yest time I ever been from home; now you wouldn't of believed that, would you? But I admire to have saw you, that's so. You've got to come and eat with me. Me and my boy ain't been fed yit. What might one call yo' name? Jools? Come on, Jools. Come on, Colossus. That's my niggah—his name's Colossus of Rhodes. Is that yo' yallah boy, Jools? Fetch him along, Colossus. It seems like a special prov*idence*.—Jools, do you believe in a special prov*idence?*"

Jules said he did.

The new-made friends moved briskly off, followed by Baptiste and a short, square, old negro, very black and grotesque, who had introduced himself to the mulatto, with many glittering and cavernous smiles, as "d'body-sarvant of d'Rev'n' Mr. Jones."

Both pairs enlivened their walk with conversation. Parson Jones descanted upon the doctrine he had mentioned, as illustrated in the perplexities of cotton-growing, and concluded that there would always be "a special prov*idence* again' cotton untell folks quits apressin' of it and haulin' of it on Sundays!"

"*Je dis*," said St.-Ange, in response, "I thing you is juz right. I believe, me, strong-strong in the improvidence, yes. You know my papa he hown a sugar-plantation, you know. 'Jules, me son,' he say one time to me, 'I goin' to make one baril sugah to fedge the moze high price in New Orleans.' Well, he take his bez baril sugah—I nevah see a so careful man like me papa always to

make a so beautiful sugah *et sirop.* 'Jules, go at Father Pierre an' ged this lill pitcher fill with holy water, an' tell him sen' his tin bucket, and I will make it fill with *quitte.*' I ged the holy water; my papa sprinkle it over the baril, an' make one cross on the 'ead of the baril."

"Why, Jools," said Parson Jones, "that didn't do no good."

"Din do no good! Id broughd the so great value! You can strike me dead if thad baril sugah din fedge the more high cost than any other in the city. *Parceque,* the man what buy that baril sugah he make a mistake of one hundred pound" – falling back—"*Mais* certainlee!"

"And you think that was growin' out of the holy water?" asked the parson.

"*Mais,* what could make it else? Id could not be the *quitte,* because my papa keep the bucket, an' forget to sen' the *quitte* to Father Pierre."

Parson Jones was disappointed.

"Well, now, Jools, you know, I don't think that was right. I reckon you must be a plum Catholic."

M. St.-Ange shrugged. He would not deny his faith.

"I am a *Catholique, mais"*—brightening as he hoped to recommend himself anew—"not a good one."

"Well, you know," said Jones—"where's Colossus? Oh! all right. Colossus strayed off a minute in Mobile, and I plum lost him for two days. Here's the place; come in. Colossus and this boy

can go to the kitchen.—Now, Colossus, what *air* you a-beckonin at me faw?"

He let his servant draw him aside and address him in a whisper.

"Oh, go 'way!" said the parson with a jerk. "Who's goin' to throw me? What? Speak louder. Why, Colossus, you shayn't talk so, saw. 'Pon my soul, you're the mightiest fool I ever taken up with. Jest you go down that alley-way with this yalla boy, and don't show yo' face untell yo' called!"

The negro begged; the master wrathily insisted.

"Colossus, will you do ez I tell you, or shell I hev to strike you, saw?"

"Oh Mahs Jimmy, I—I's gwine; but"—he ventured nearer—"don't on no account drink nothin', Mahs Jimmy."

Such was the negro's earnestness that he put one foot in the gutter, and fell heavily against his master. The parson threw him off angrily.

"Thar, now! Why, Colossus, you most of been dosted with sumthin'; yo' plum crazy.—Humph, come on, Jools, let's eat! Humph! to tell me that when I never taken a drop, exceptin' for chills, in my life—which he knows so as well as me!"

The two masters began to ascend a stair.

"*Mais*, he is a sassy; I would sell him, me," said the young Creole.

"No, I wouldn't do that" replied the parson; "though there is people in Bethesdy who says he is a rascal. He's a powerful smart fool. Why, that boy's got money, Jools; more money than

religion, I reckon. I'm shore he fallen into mighty bad company"—they passed beyond earsnot.

Baptiste and Colossus, instead of going to the tavern kitchen, passed to the next door and entered the dark rear corner of a low grocery, where, the law notwithstanding, liquor was covertly sold to slaves. There, in the quiet company of Baptiste and the grocer, the colloquial powers of Colossus, which were simply prodigious, began very soon to show themselves.

"For whilst," said he, "Mahs Jimmy has eddication, you know—whilst he has eddication, I has 'scretion. He has eddication and I has 'scretion, an' so we gits along."

He drew a black bottle down the counter, and, laying half his length upon the damp board, continued:

"As a p'inciple I discredits de imbimin' of awjus liquors. De imbimin' of awjus liquors, de wiolution of de Sabbad, de playin' of de fiddle, and de usin' of by-words, dey is de fo' sins of de conscience; an' if any man sin de fo' sins of de conscience, de debble done sharp his fork fo' dat man.—Ain't that so, boss?"

The grocer was sure it was so.

"Neberdeless, mind you"—here the orator brimmed his glass from the bottle and swallowed the contents with a dry eye—"mind you, a roytious man, sech as ministers of de gospel and dere body-sarvants, can take a *leetle* for de weak stomach."

But the fascinations of Colossus's eloquence must not mislead us; this is the story of a true Christian; to wit, Parson Jones.

The parson and his new friend ate. But the coffee M. St.-Ange declared he could not touch; it was too wretchedly bad. At the French Market near by, there was some noble coffee. This, however, would have to be bought, and Parson Jones had scruples.

"You see, Jools, every man has his conscience to guide him, which it does so in——"

"Oh, yes!" cried St.-Ange, "conscien'; thad is the bez, Posson Jone'. Certainlee! I am a *Catholique,* you is a *schismatique;* you thing it is wrong to dring some coffee—well, then, it *is* wrong; you thing it is wrong to make the sugah to ged the so large price—well, then, it *is* wrong; I think it is right—well, then, it *is* right; it is all 'abit; *c'est tout.* What a man thing is right, *is right;* 'tis all 'abit. A man muz nod go again' his conscien'. My faith! do you thing I would go again' my conscien'? *Mais allons,* led us go and ged some coffee.'

"Jools."

"W'at?"

"Jools, it ain't the drinkin' of coffee, but the buyin' of it on a Sabbath. You must really excuse me, Jools, it's again' conscience, you know."

"Ah!" said St.-Ange, "*c'est* very true. For you it would be a sin, *mais* for me it is only 'abit. Rilligion is a very strange; I know a man one time, he thing it was wrong to go to cock-fight Sunday

evening. I thing it is all 'abit. *Mais,* come, Posson Jone'; I have got one friend, Miguel; led us go at his house and ged some coffee. Come; Miguel have no familie; only him and Joe—always like to see friend; *allons,* led us come yonder."

"Why, Jools, my dear friend, you know," said the shamefaced parson, "I never visit on Sundays."

"Never w'at?" asked the astounded Creole.

"No," said Jones, smiling awkwardly.

"Never visite?"

"Exceptin' sometimes amongst church members," said Parson Jones.

"*Mais,*" said the seductive St.-Ange, "Miguel and Joe is church member'—certainlee! They love to talk about rilligion. Come at Miguel and talk about some rilligion. I am nearly expire for me coffee."

Parson Jones took his hat from beneath his chair and rose up.

"Jools," said the weak giant, "I ought to be in church right now."

"*Mais,* the church is right yonder at Miguel', yes. Ah!" continued St.-Ange, as they descended the stairs, "I thing every man muz have the rilligion he like' the bez—me, I like the *Catholique* rilligion the bez—for me it *is* the bez. Every man will sure go to heaven if he like his rilligion the bez."

"Jools," said the West-Floridian, laying his great hand tenderly upon the Creole's shoulder, as they stepped out upon the *banquette,* "do you think you have any shore hopes of heaven?"

"Yass!" replied St.-Ange; "I am sure-sure. I thing everybody will go to heaven. I thing you will go, *et* I thing Miguel will go, *et* Joe—everybody, I thing—*mais*, hof course, not if they not have been christen'. Even I thing some niggers will go."

"Jools," said the parson, stopping in his walk—"Jools, I *don't* want to lose my niggah."

"You will not loose him. With Baptiste he *cannot* get loose."

But Colossus's master was not re-assured.

"Now," said he, still tarrying, "this is jest the way; had I of gone to church——"

"Posson Jone'," said Jules.

"What?"

"I tell you. We goin' to church!"

"Will you?" asked Jones, joyously.

"*Allons*, come along," said Jules, taking his elbow.

They walked down the Rue Chartres, passed several corners, and by and by turned into a cross-street. The parson stopped an instant as they were turning and looked back up the street.

"W'at you lookin'?" asked his companion.

"I thought I saw Colossus," answered the parson, with an anxious face; "I reckon 'twa'n't him, though." And they went on.

The street they now entered was a very quiet one. The eye of any chance passer would have been at once drawn to a broad, heavy, white brick edifice on the lower side of the way, with a flag-pole standing out like a bowsprit from one of its

great windows, and a pair of lamps hanging before a large closed entrance. It was a theatre, honeycombed with gambling-dens. At this morning hour all was still, and the only sign of life was a knot of little barefoot girls gathered within its narrow shade, and each carrying an infant relative. Into this place the parson and M. St.-Ange entered, the little nurses jumping up from the sills to let them pass in.

A half-hour may have passed. At the end of that time the whole juvenile company were laying alternate eyes and ears to the chinks, to gather what they could of an interesting quarrel going on within.

"I did not, saw! I given you no cause of offence, saw! It's not so, saw! Mister Jools simply mistaken the house, thinkin' it was a Sabbath-school! No such thing, saw; I *ain't* bound to bet! Yes, I kin git out Yes, without bettin'! I hev a right to my opinion; I reckon I'm a *white man*, saw! No, saw! I on'y said I didn't think you could get the game on them cards. 'Sno such thing, saw! I do *not* know how to play! I wouldn't hev a rascal's money ef I should win it! Shoot, ef you dare! You can kill me, but you cayn't scare me! No, I shayn't bet! I'll die first! Yes, saw; Mr. Jools can bet for me if he admires to; I ain't his mostah."

Here the speaker seemed to direct his words to St.-Ange.

"Saw, I don't understand you, saw. I never said I'd loan you money to bet for me. I didn't

suspicion this from you, saw. No, I won't take any more lemonade; it's the most notorious stuff I ever drank, saw!"

M. St.-Ange's replies were in *falsetto* and not without effect; for presently the parson's indignation and anger began to melt. "Don't ask me, Jools, I can't help you. It's no use; it's a matter of conscience with me, Jools."

"*Mais oui!* 'tis a matt' of conscien' wid me, the same."

"But, Jools, the money's none o' mine, nohow; it belongs to Smyrny, you know."

"If I could make jus' *one* bet," said the persuasive St.-Ange, "I would leave this place, fas' fas', yes. If I had thing—*mais* I did not soupspicion this from you, Posson Jone'."

"Don't, Jools, don't!"

"No! Posson Jone'."

"You're bound to win?" said the parson, wavering.

"*Mais certainement!* But it is not to win that I want; 'tis me conscien'—me honor!"

"Well, Jools, I hope I'm not a-doin' no wrong. I'll loan you some of this money if you say you'll come right out 'thout takin' your winnin's."

All was still. The peeping children could see the parson as he lifted his hand to his breast-pocket. There it paused a moment in bewilderment, then plunged to the bottom. It came back empty, and fell lifelessly at his side. His head dropped upon his breast, his eyes were for a moment closed, his broad palms were lifted and

pressed against his forehead, a tremor seized him, and he fell all in a lump to the floor. The children ran off with their infant-loads, leaving Jules St.-Ange swearing by all his deceased relatives, first to Miguel and Joe, and then to the lifted parson, that he did not know what had become of the money "except if" the black man had got it.

In the rear of ancient New Orleans, beyond the sites of the old rampart, a trio of Spanish forts, where the town has since sprung up and grown old, green with all the luxuriance of the wild Creole summer, lay the congo Plains. Here stretched the canvas of the historic Cayetano, who Sunday after Sunday sowed the sawdust for his circus-ring.

But to-day the great showman had fallen short of his printed promise. The hurricane had come by night, and with one fell swash had made an irretrievable sop of everything. The circus trailed away its bedraggled magnificence, and the ring was cleared for the bull.

Then the sun seemed to come out and work for the people. "See," said the Spaniards, looking up at the glorious sky with its great, white fleets drawn off upon the horizon—"see—heaven smiles upon the bull-fight!"

In the high upper seats of the rude amphitheatre sat the gayly-decked wives and daughters of the Gascons, from the *métaries* along the Ridge, and the chattering Spanish women of the Market, their shining hair unbonneted to the sun. Next below were their husbands and lovers in Sunday

blouses, milkmen, butchers, bakers, black-bearded fishermen, Sicilian fruiterers, swarthy Portuguese sailors, in little woollen caps, and strangers of the graver sort; mariners of England, Germany, and Holland. The lowest seats were full of trappers, smugglers, Canadian *voyageurs*, drinking and singing; *Américains*, too—more's the shame—from the upper rivers—who will not keep their seats—who ply the bottle, and who will get home by and by and tell how wicked Sodom is; broad-brimmed, silver-braided Mexicans, too, with their copper cheeks and bats' eyes, and their tinkling spurred heels. Yonder, in that quieter section, are the quadroon women in their black lace shawls—and there is Baptiste; and below them are the turbaned black women, and there is—but he vanishes—Colossus.

The afternoon is advancing, yet the sport, though loudly demanded, does not begin. The *Américains* grow derisive and find pastime in gibes and raillery. They mock the various Latins with their national inflections, and answer their scowls with laughter. Some of the more aggressive shout pretty French greetings to the women of Gascony, and one bargeman, amid peals of applause, stands on a seat and hurls a kiss to the quadroons. The mariners of England, Germany, and Holland, as spectators, like the fun, while the Spaniards look black and cast defiant imprecations upon their persecutors. Some Gascons, with timely caution, pick their women out and depart, running a terrible fire of gallantries.

In hope of truce, a new call is raised for the bull: "The bull, the bull!—hush!"

In a tier near the ground a man is standing and calling—standing head and shoulders above the rest—calling in the *Américaine* tongue. Another man, big and red, named Joe, and a handsome little Creole in elegant dress and full of laughter, wish to stop him, but the flat-boatmen, ha-ha-ing and cheering, will not suffer it. Ah, through some shameful knavery of the men, into whose hands he has fallen, he is drunk! Even the women can see that; and now he throws his arms wildly and raises his voice until the whole great circle hears it. He is preaching!

Ah! kind Lord, for a special providence now! The men of his own nation—men from the land of the open English Bible and temperance cup and song are cheering him on to mad disgrace. And now another call for the appointed sport is drowned by the flat-boatmen singing the ancient tune of Mear. You can hear the words—

"Old Grimes is dead, that good old soul"

—from ribald lips and throats turned brazen with laughter, from singers who toss their hats aloft and roll in their seats; the chorus swells to the accompaniment of a thousand brogans—

"He used to wear an old gray coat
All buttoned down before."

A ribboned man in the arena is trying to be heard, and the Latins raise one mighty cry for silence. The big red man gets a hand over the

parson's mouth, and the ribboned man seizes his moment.

"They have been endeavoring for hours," he says, "to draw the terrible animals from their dens, but such is their strength and fierceness, that——"

His voice is drowned. Enough has been heard to warrant the inference that the beasts cannot be whipped out of the storm-drenched cages to which menagerie-life and long starvation have attached them, and from the roar of indignation the man of ribbons flies. The noise increases. Men are standing up by hundreds, and women are imploring to be let out of the turmoil. All at once, like the bursting of a dam, the whole mass pours down into the ring. They sweep across the arena and over the showman's barriers. Miguel gets a frightful trampling. Who cares for gates or doors? They tear the beasts' houses bar from bar, and, laying hold of the gaunt buffalo, drag him forth by feet, ears, and tail; and in the midst of the *mêlée*, still head and shoulders above all, wilder, with the cup of the wicked, than any beast, is the man of God from the Florida parishes!

In his arms he bore—and all the people shouted at once when they saw it—the tiger. He had lifted it high up with its back to his breast, his arms clasped under its shoulders; the wretched brute had curled up caterpillar-wise, with its long tail against its belly, and through its filed teeth grinned a fixed and impotent wrath. And Parson Jones was shouting:

"The tiger and the buffler *shell* lay down together! You dah to say they shayn't and I'll comb you with this varmint from head to foot! The tiger and the buffler *shell* lay down together. They *shell!* Now, you, Joe! Behold! I am here to see it done. The lion and the buffler *shell* lay down together!"

Mouthing these words again and again, the parson forced his way through the surge in the wake of the buffalo. This creature the Latins had secured by a lariat over his head, and were dragging across the old rampart and into a street of the city.

The northern races were trying to prevent, and there was pommelling and knocking down, cursing and knife drawing, until Jules St.-Ange was quite carried away with the fun, laughed, clapped his hands, and swore with delight, and ever kept close to the gallant parson.

Joe, contrariwise, counted all this child's-play an interruption. He had come to find Colossus and the money. In an unlucky moment he made bold to lay hold of the parson, but a piece of the broken barriers in the hands of a flat-boatman felled him to the sod, the terrible crowd swept over him, the lariat was cut and the giant parson hurled the tiger upon the buffalo's back. In another instant both brutes were dead at the hands of the mob; Jones was lifted from his feet, and prating of Scripture and the millennium, of Paul at Ephesus and Daniel in the "buffler's" den, was borne aloft upon the shoulders of the huzzaing *Américains*.

Half an hour later he was sleeping heavily on the floor of a cell in the *calaboza.*

When Parson Jones awoke, a bell was somewhere tolling for midnight. Somebody was at the door of his cell with a key. The lock grated, the door swung, the turnkey looked in and stepped back, and a ray of moonlight fell upon M. Jules St.-Ange. The prisoner sat upon the empty shackles and ring-bolt in the centre of the floor.

"Misty Posson Jone'," said the visitor, softly.

"O Jools!"

"*Mais,* w'at de matter, Posson Jone'?"

"My sins, Jools, my sins!"

"Ah! Posson Jone', is that something to cry, because a man get sometime a litt' bit intoxicate? *Mais,* if a man keep *all the time* intoxicate, I think that is again' the conscien'."

"Jools, Jools, your eyes is darkened—oh! Jools, where's my pore old niggah?"

"Posson Jone', never min'; he is wid Baptiste."

"Where?"

"I don' know w'ere—*mais* he is wid Baptiste. Baptiste is a beautiful to take care of somebody."

"Is he as good as you, Jools?" asked Parson Jones, sincerely.

Jules was slightly staggered.

"You know, Posson Jone', you know, a nigger cannot be good as a w'ite man—*mais* Baptiste is a good nigger."

The parson moaned and dropped his chin into his hands.

"I was to of left for home to-morrow, sun-up, on

the *Isabella* schooner. Pore Smyrny!" He deeply sighed.

"Posson Jone'," said Jules, leaning against the wall and smiling, "I swear you is the moz funny man I ever see. If I was you I would say, me, 'Ah! 'ow I am lucky! the money I los', it was not mine, anyhow!' My faith! shall a man make hisse'f to be the more sorry because the money he los' is not his? Me, I would say, 'it is a specious providence.'

"Ah! Misty Posson Jone'," he continued, "you make a so droll sermon ad the bull-ring. Ha! ha! I swear I thing you can make money to preach thad sermon many time ad the theatre St. Philippe. Hah! you is the moz brave dat I never see, *mais* ad the same time the moz rilligious man. Where I'm goin' to fin' one priest to make like dat? *Mais*, why you can't cheer up an' be 'appy? Me, if I should be miserabl' like that I would kill meself."

The countryman only shook his head.

"*Bien*, Posson Jone', I have the so good news for you."

The prisoner looked up with eager inquiry.

"Las'. evening when they lock' you, I come right off at M. De Blanc's house to get you let out of de calaboose; M. De Blanc he is the judge. So soon I was entering—'Ah! Jules, me boy, juz the man to make complete the game!' Posson Jone', it was a specious providence! I win in t'ree hours more dan six hundred dollah! Look." He produced a mass of bank-notes, *bons*, and due-bills.

"And you got the pass?" asked the parson, regarding the money with a sadness incomprehensible to Jules.

"It is here; it take the effect so soon the daylight."

"Jools, my friend, your kindness is in vain."

The Creole's face became a perfect blank.

"Because," said the parson, "for two reasons: firstly, I have broken the laws, and ought to stand the penalty; and secondly—you must really excuse me, Jools, you know, but the pass has been got onfairly, I'm afeerd. You told the judge I was innocent; and in neither case it don't become a Christian (which I hope I can still say I am one) to 'do evil that good may come.' I muss stay."

M. St.-Ange stood up aghast, and for a moment speechless, at this exhibition of moral heroism; but an artifice was presently hit upon. "*Mais,* Posson Jone'!"—in his old *falsetto*—"de order—you cannot read it, it is in French—compel you to go hout, sir!"

"Is that so?" cried the parson, bounding up with radiant face—"is that so, Jools?"

The young man nodded, smiling; but, though he smiled, the fountain of his tenderness was opened. He made the sign of the cross as the parson knelt in prayer, and even whispered "Hail Mary," etc., quite through, twice over.

Morning broke in summer glory upon a cluster of villas behind the city, nestled under live-oaks and magnolias on the banks of a deep bayou, and known as Suburb St. Jean.

With the first beam came the West-Floridian and the Creole out upon the bank below the village. Upon the parson's arm hung a pair of antique saddle-bags. Baptiste limped wearily behind; both his eyes were encircled with broad blue rings, and one cheek-bone bore the official impress of every knuckle of Colossus's left hand. The "beautiful to take care of somebody" had lost his charge. At mention of the negro he became wild, and, half in English, half in the "gumbo" dialect, said murderous things. Intimidated by Jules to calmness, he became able to speak confidently on one point; he could, would, and did swear that Colossus had gone home to the Florida parishes; he was almost certain; in fact, he thought so.

There was a clicking of pulleys as the three appeared upon the bayou's margin, and Baptiste pointed out, in the deep shadow of a great oak, the *Isabella,* moored among the bulrushes, and just spreading her sails for departure. Moving down to where she lay, the parson and his friend paused on the bank, loath to say farewell.

"O Jools!" said the parson, "supposin' Colossus ain't gone home! O Jools, if you'll look him out for me, I'll never forget you—I'll never forget you, nohow, Jools. No, Jools, I never will believe he taken that money. Yes, I know all niggahs will steal"—he set foot upon the gang-plank—"but Colossus wouldn't steal from me. Good-by."

"Misty Posson Jone'," said St.-Ange, putting his hand on the parson's arm with genuine affec-

tion, "hol' on. You see dis money—w'at I win las' night? Well, I win' it by a specious providence, ain't it?"

"There's no tellin'," said the humbled Jones. "Providence

> 'Moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform.'"

"Ah!" cried the Creole, "*c'est* very true. I ged this money in the mysterieuze way. *Mais*, if I keep dis money, you know where it goin' be to-night?"

"I really can't say," replied the parson.

"Goin' to de dev'," said the sweetly-smiling young man.

The schooner-captain, leaning against the shrouds, and even Baptiste, laughed outright.

"O Jools, you mustn't!"

"Well, den, w'at I shall do wid *it?*"

"Any thing!" answered the parson; "better donate it away to some poor man——"

"Ah! Misty Posson Jone', dat is w'at I want. You los' five hondred dollar'—'twas me fault."

"No, it wa'n't, Jools."

"*Mais*, it was!"

"No!"

"It *was* me fault! I *swear* it was me fault! *Mais* here is five hondred dollar'; I wish you shall take it. Here! I don't got no use for money.—Oh, my faith! Posson Jone', you must not begin to cry some more."

Parson Jones was choked with tears. When he found voice he said:

"O Jools, Jools, Jools! my pore, noble, dear, misguidened friend! ef you hed of hed a Christian raisin'! May the Lord show you your errors better'n I kin, and bless you for your good intentions—oh, no! I cayn't touch that money with a ten-foot pole; it wa'n't rightly got; you must really excuse me, my dear friend, but I cayn't touch it."

St.-Ange was petrified.

"Good-by, dear Jools," continued the parson. "I'm in the Lord's haynds, and he's very merciful, which I hope and trust you'll find it out. Good-by!"—the schooner swung slowly off before the breeze—"good-by!"

St.-Ange roused himself.

"Posson Jone'! make me hany'ow *dis* promise: you never, never, *never* will come back to New Orleans."

"Ah, Jools, the Lord willin', I'll never leave home again!"

"All right!" cried the Creole; "I thing he's willin'. Adieu, Posson Jone'. My faith! you are the so fighting an' moz rilligious man as I never saw! Adieu! Adieu!"

Baptiste uttered a cry and presently ran by his master toward the schooner, his hands full of clods.

St.-Ange looked just in time to see the sable form of Colossus of Rhodes emerge from the vessel's hold, and the pastor of Smyrna and Bethesda seize him in his embrace.

"O Colossus! you outlandish old nigger! Thank the Lord! Thank the Lord!"

The little Creole almost wept. He ran down the tow-path laughing and swearing, and making confused allusion to the entire *personnel* and furniture of the lower regions.

By odd fortune, at the moment that St.-Ange further demonstrated his delight by tripping his mulatto into a bog, the schooner came brushing along the reedy bank with a graceful curve, the sails flapped, and the crew fell to poling her slowly along.

Parson Jones was on the deck, kneeling once more in prayer. His hat had fallen before him; behind him knelt his slave. In thundering tones he was confessing himself "a plum fool," from whom "the conceit had been jolted out," and had been made to see that even his "nigger had the longest head of the two."

Colossus clasped his hands and groaned.

The parson prayed for a contrite heart.

"Oh, yes!" cried Colossus.

The master acknowledged countless mercies.

"Dat's so!" cried the slave.

The master prayed that they might still be "piled on."

"Glory!" cried the black man, clapping his hands; "pile on!"

"An' now," continued the parson, "bring this pore, backslidin' jackace of a parson and this pore ole fool nigger back to thar home in peace!"

"Pray fo' de money!" called Colossus.

But the parson prayed for Jules.

"Pray fo' de *money!*" repeated the negro.

"And oh, give thy servant back that there lost money!"

Colossus rose stealthily, and tiptoed by his still shouting master. St.-Ange, the captain, the crew, gazed in silent wonder at the strategist. Pausing but an instant over the master's hat to grin an acknowledgment of his beholders' speechless interest, he softly placed in it the faithfully-mourned and honestly prayed-for Smyrna fund; then, saluted by the gesticulative, silent applause of St.-Ange and the schoonermen, he resumed his first attitude behind his roaring master.

"Amen!" cried Colossus, meaning to bring him to a close.

"Onworthy though I be"——cried Jones.

"*Amen!*" reiterated the negro.

"A-a-amen!" said Parson Jones.

He rose to his feet, and, stooping to take up his hat, beheld the well-known roll. As one stunned, he gazed for a moment upon his slave, who still knelt with clasped hands and rolling eyeballs; but when he became aware of the laughter and cheers that greeted him from both deck and shore, he lifted eyes and hands to heaven, and cried like the veriest babe. And when he looked at the roll again, and hugged and kissed it, St.-Ange tried to raise a second shout, but choked, and the crew fell to their poles.

And now up runs Baptiste, covered with slime, and prepares to cast his projectiles. The first one fell wide of the mark; the schooner swung round

into a long reach of water, where the breeze was in her favor; another shout of laughter drowned the maledictions of the muddy man; the sails filled; Colossus of Rhodes, smiling and bowing as hero of the moment, ducked as the main boom swept round, and the schooner, leaning slightly to the pleasant influence, rustled a moment over the bulrushes, and then sped far away down the rippling bayou.

M. Jules St.-Ange stood long, gazing at the receding vessel as it now disappeared, now re-appeared beyond the tops of the high undergrowth; but, when an arm of the forest hid it finally from sight, he turned townward, followed by that fagged-out spaniel, his servant, saying, as he turned, "Baptiste."

"*Miché?*"

"You know w'at I goin' do wid dis money?"

"*Non, m'sieur.*"

"Well, you can strike me dead if I don't goin' to pay hall my debts! *Allons!*"

He began a merry little song to the effect that his sweetheart was a wine-bottle, and master and man, leaving care behind, returned to the picturesque Rue Royale. The ways of Providence are indeed strange. In all Parson Jones's afterlife, amid the many painful reminiscences of his visit to the City of the Plain, the sweet knowledge was withheld from him that by the light of the Christian virtue that shone from him even in his great fall, Jules St.-Ange arose, and went to his father an honest man.

GEORGE W. CABLE.

NOVEMBER 17

LIFE*

LIFE is the only thing that matters. And the only real crime is not to live to the full—with a fullness that shall be attained not in the vicious sense of excesses, or by satisfactions of base cravings, or the frenzied glutting of desires transmitted to us by dim fierce ancestors who were still brute-like and obscene, but by being keenly conscious of one's life and resolutely refusing to allow it to pass away as a dream.

It is absurd to speak of the inequality of fortune as cruel when you think of the cruelty of nature in her unequal dole of life to different individuals—some so strong, some so feeble—long lives, short lives—lives that can be opulent with use and happiness, poor frustrated lives that are empty except that they hold a thousand vain regrets.

It is absurd for rich people to cry out when their riches are taken from them, to groan under the burden of a new taxation and crave pity because they are threatened with the ultimate loss of all. No state, no socialist or communist

*From the volume of the same title by permission of the author.

within a state, as yet has threatened to take life from them.

It is absurd for the laboring classes to talk of the right to work, the right to earn a generous wage, the right to secure decent shelter, leisure, or repose. They are alive, and therefore have no true grievance. The real unemployed are the *dead*. Think of them. If they came out to march the streets in procession! Those are the people I pity—and I pity no other.

The priceless boon of life! Look at it how you will, whatever your religious faith, whatever your scientific theories or instinctive beliefs, you must see it as the glory and the flower, the wondrous spark of light leaping upward in the eternal darkness. Millions and millions of ages have gone to the making of it; the worlds have grown hot and cold, a chaos of dust followed a chaos of whirling fire, gases became liquid, that which was liquid grew solid; beaten tracks were made in the pathless void, rhythm and swinging gait were given to the umimaginable number of the stars—and still the reign of nothingness continued. Life had not come. But now at last—at long last—it is suddenly here.

Suddenly and now—for, in comparison with the unmeasured preceding blankness of time, all its record is as yesterday, as a moment ago—it is here with us, in us. Life!

Oh, never blaspheme against life. Never say life is ugly. Even in old, old people life is still sacred and beautiful. The bodily ruin, that out-

ward wreck that afflicts the sight when you compare it with the fresh strong splendors of youth, only indicates that the life there is less, weaker. But it is there, a divinely beneficent glory still to be revered.

And love, the great joy, is only a part of life. Perhaps it is the supreme expression of life—but to get it you only need life. What's the good of money, fine clothes, rich rooms, to two people who are swept into each other's arms by love? All that they truly need is a dry ditch and a rainless sky—and life.

All people who are alive should be happy, and most of them are—far more than is generally believed.

I have never been able to understand how, in view of all history and research, people can persuade themselves that Death is not the unchanged the unchangeable order of the universe. Death is natural, universal, unending. It is Life, fitful and precarious Life, that is unnatural, supernatural, sublime. It is a glorious defiance; a splendid, incredible achievement, as of a young leader in a noble revolution, or the forlorn hope in an immense lost battle that miraculously holds back the overwhelming foe for a brief space. It fights against the preposterous odds, fights, and triumphs for a little while.

That is how I personally see the thing wherever I look. Poor little Life, the magnificent upstart, fighting, fighting against Death the tremendous possessor of time, space, and irreducible matter.

And we must fight for it, too, fight for the flame, the oriflamme, the glorious banner that is waving over the deadly inert forces, the rallying point that signals for support against the pressure of a myriad black, unseeing faces. If we stand with limp arms, watching the struggle and not taking our part in it, we are traitors to Life and to ourselves.

Since the greatest manifestation of life vouchsafed to us is in ourselves, it follows logically that we must hold self as something high and sacred, and make the care of it our paramount, undeviating duty. We are lamp-carriers. We must tend the flames, feed it, and keep it bright. To the exalting of self in this sense there cannot logically be any limits. Giving a nobler, truer meaning to nature's law of self-preservation, we must abide by it, and, fulfilling the law, we shall have performed the one and only recognizable task of human beings.

For we should remember that if we ignore ourselves, if we tamely submit and surrender, if we cease to struggle and fight, this death that is attacking us has not even a tragic beauty; nor will its inevitableness give it dignity or make it sublime by reason of those recently acquired notions that now hang like colored fringes about the blank shapeless vesture with which men first clothed the revolting inhuman idea or conception of finality. It will come not as the rending and shattering of battlefields, a pang of fiery anguish, a last flash of nobly acquiescent

thought, and then extinction, but as a disgusting, loathsome disease of darkness that begins to invade us when we are no more than adolescent or scarcely yet mature, with a slow decay of the body and a deepening twilight of the mind. It will come like the dusk that creeps across the world from east to west, so that when we turn toward where the dawn has been our long shadows stretch out before us to embrace the gloom of approaching night.

My first thought of the common and irrevocable doom came to me when I was quite young. I had read of somebody condemned to death committing suicide in his cell, and I tried to think out what was the state of mind of this man.

It seemed that he must have said to himself, "Why wait, since I am condemned? To-day or to-morrow! What can I do in the little time that remains available? Something so small that it is not worth doing."

Then I had the old thought, the thought that is as old as thought itself: "We are all condemned to death. To-day or to-morrow. For all of us our time is so pitifully short. What can we do with it?"

Well, at least we can live.

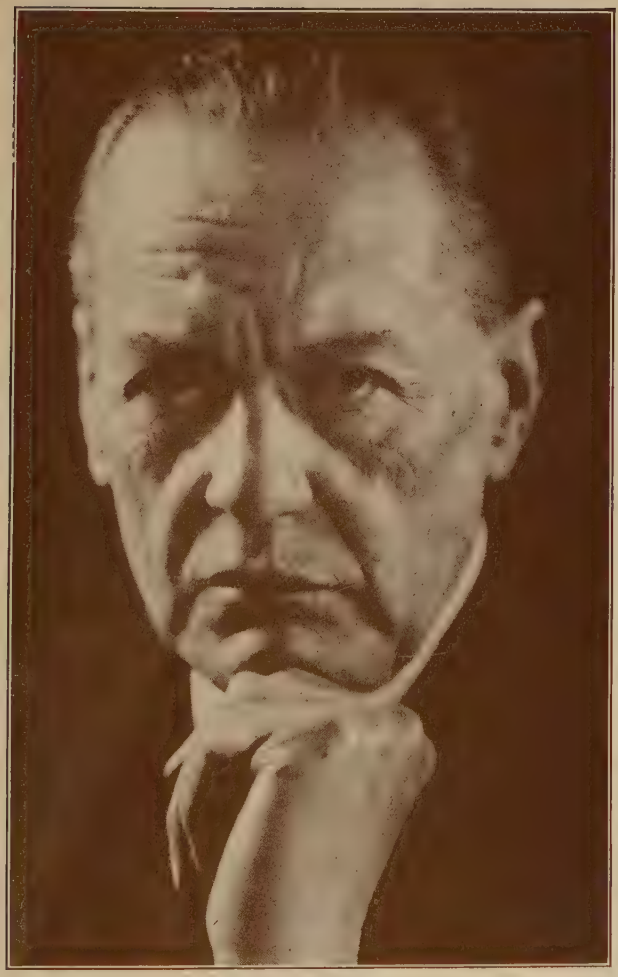
Since then I do not think I have ever feared death; but I have feared (and, oh, how I fear it still!) what for want of a better name I must call death-in-life—that death which overwhelms us before the appointed date, which we bring upon ourselves, which dulls our faculties, steals our

joy; that blunting of perception, fading of imaginative thought, dimming and obliterating of use, kindness, and altruistic aim—that death-in-life which makes us no more than moving corpses while we are still permitted to linger in the sunshine and the air.

A thing may be absolutely trite and yet well worth saying. Indeed readers of books as a rule are much fonder of any short generalization of an obvious truth than they are of the wittiest and most sparkling kind of epigram. The verbal fireworks merely make them laugh or admire; whereas the other thing sometimes shows them their own half-conscious thought, opens the closed doors of their secret hearts, and lets the light through so that they look right into themselves.

Thus, in a book of mine, I happened to say, "If one does not know one is in prison, one is free," and, although nothing could be more obvious, this had sufficient effect to cause a few readers to take the trouble of sitting down and writing to me.

The gist of the letters was that I had for once "hit the target," and that truly the world contains an enormous number of prisoners who are not at all aware that they are in prison. And the sadness comes—as my correspondents told me—with the *awakening:* when for the first time one bumps one's head against the prison walls, hears the clank of the chain, or feels the iron galling one's wrists and ankles.



W. B. MAXWELL

Here is an instance, from my letters. A girl employed in a London office had a sweetheart who was ill at a distance from her, and she wanted to go to him—wanted very badly. But she could not afford the money for the journey. Till then she had felt so proud, so full of independence; thinking of it perhaps vaguely, but always being sustained by the thought that she had taken destiny into her own hands and achieved complete freedom. Now in a moment she felt herself a failure. She went to her work dully and dejectedly. "As you said, Mr. Maxwell, I was in prison."

I do not altogether agree with her estimate of the situation. Nor do I consider the case typical. Anyhow, here is another case:

A really successful business man, a friend of mine in the United States, had a chance of going to South America under very delightful conditions and there opening out for himself a new and interesting career. Being only in middle life and with unexhausted energy, he wished to take the chance; but when he went to his partners or board of directors they would not let him go. It was not fair, they said, appealing to his sense of honor or generosity—"Don't desert us. Don't let us down now, after doing so much for us in the past." They refused to be moved by his arguments. Vainly he urged that no one is really necessary, that a substitute could easily be found, that it was a concern so well started that it would run by itself. . . . "I realized

then," he wrote, "that those men were my jailers. It took me four years to get out of prison. But at last the morning came when I was able to say, 'Now, gentlemen, I am going to Peru and you may all go to Hell.'"

A third case is more delicate and subtle: A well-to-do but not wealthy woman of thirty-five told me that between her and her husband there had subsisted since marriage unbroken confidence and affection. She had always felt—like the ground beneath her feet—his solid trust in her. Then all at once he objected to her friendship with a man who was not only much older than herself, but also a long-tried friend of her family. This elderly companion was intelligent, amiable, pleasant, and she went with him occasionally to plays and concerts, had a game of golf with him (when her husband was engrossed in business), or took a little walk with him on fine afternoons. She told me at this point that she was not attractive or fascinating "in *any* way," but as she omitted to send a photograph I am naturally rather sceptical as to the total absence of external charms.

"You may think I am old-fashioned," said the husband, forbidding this acquaintanceship.

"I don't think you're old-fashioned," she replied. "I think you're utterly absurd"; and she asked if he no longer trusted her.

He said that he trusted her implicitly.

Then she asked, "Do you mean to say you are jealous?" And she explained to me that if he

had been jealous she would have felt pleased. But he was not jealous either. He said he objected to her having this man friend or any other man friend because it derogated from his personal dignity. She belonged to him; and he could not allow the world to see anybody else enjoying her society, even though unable himself to use it at the moment. He would not allow such a liberty to be taken with his property—any more than he would allow his motor car to be driven out by any elderly gentleman who had not a car of his own, or his books to be borrowed behind his back, or his favorite armchair sat in.

Then for the first time she realized that she was a prisoner. He could not have made her understand the fact more clearly if he had compelled her to take off her pretty evening frock (Paris model) and put on a pair of knickerbockers marked all over with broad arrows. If the maid had brought her skilly instead of a cup of early morning tea, she could not have felt more abjectly, more humiliatingly, that she was in prison.

Yet till then she had believed that her life was her own.

For a further illustration I am forced to speak of myself. I live in England, in London; and England is so small that one is apt to feel one may fall over the edge of it, while London is thronged with so many people that sometimes it seems to be a crowded room in which one cannot find a chair. When those sensations come upon me with strength I announce to my wife and

family that I am going right away—for months, for a year. I say I cannot any longer put up with them and metropolitan domesticity, I must have relief—and I glare at them.

They say, "What a good idea!" They applaud the sudden decision, and before my face they talk about it, confessing to each other that for a long time they have seen how much I needed change.

They are playing a game with me. They make a joke of it behind my back. They tell all our friends that I am just off. I overhear them saying to uninterested visitors, "This may be the last time you'll see Daddy—because he is just starting on his wanderings. He will probably go round the world more than once before he returns to us."

Well, of course I never go. But mark the point. If they had shown the slightest opposition, if they had said I was pledged to dine with the Browns or the Joneses, if they had reminded me of business engagements that I could not possibly break, I would have become violent and brutal to them. I would have been gone as soon as I could pack my trunks.

By their immediate acquiescence they gave me the sensation of freedom, and that was all I really wanted.

With us of the Anglo-Saxon race the love of freedom is no doubt bred into our blood and bones. It was the refusal to submit to unjust

restraint, and the almost passionate desire for movement and adventure, that in the past made first the British Empire and then the United States of America. And in the hearts of Britons and Americans these feelings are perhaps as strong to-day as they were a hundred years ago, although both having achieved freedom, probably neither of them take much advantage of it. Nevertheless it is there, a theoretical possession if not an actual one; deprived of the thing itself, or the illusion as to their ownership of the thing, they would go mad. They would never cease from tumultuous movement and frantic effort until the cherished phantom had been given back to them.

But among the more intelligent citizens of these and other lands the barriers that we wish to break, the journeys of adventure that we sigh for, are nearly always impalpable and invisible; they belong to the realm of the spirit. Our need is for spiritual freedom rather than material freedom. We crave not so much for unimpeded action as for unfettered thought.

I believe, if we were able or willing to recognize the facts of the case, we should see that the occasional longing for escape, for distant wandering, for solitude, difficulty, and even what is called danger, is but an instinctively wise revolt of self. It is the struggle of self in presence of the slow insidious influences that are destroying it. It is the just claim of self for the rights of self. One's deepest innermost self, speaking to us in the only voice it can use, the instinctive or subconscious

one, cries to us for pity and help, claiming its right to live and imploring us not to continue killing it.

"Take me away," it says, "while there is still time. Take me through strange scenes and along untried paths, so that the stimulus of freshness, novelty, wonder may pour into me again as it used to do when we were children together. Then when I have eaten the new spiritual food and rested my eyes after the long abomination of sameness and monotony, when I have restored my strength and renewed my hope—then put me in some lonely place and let me *think*. Because, for life thought is needed. We die if we do not think."

And we must think our own thoughts.

W. B. MAXWELL.

NOVEMBER 18

"GRANDMITHER, THINK NOT I FORGET"

GRANDMITHER, think not I forget, when I
come back to town,
An' wander the old ways again, an' tread them up
and down.
I never smell the clover bloom, nor see the swal-
lows pass,
Wi'out I mind how good ye were unto a little lass;
I never hear the winter rain a-pelting all night
through
Wi'out I think and mind me of how cold it falls on
you.
An' if I come not often to your bed beneath the
thyme,
Mayhap 'tis that I'd change wi' ye, and gie my
bed for thine,
Would like to sleep in thine.

I never hear the summer winds among the roses
blow
Wi'out I wonder why it was ye loved the lassie so.
Ye gave me cakes and lollipops and pretty toys a
score—
I never thought I should come back and ask ye
now for more

Grandmither, gie me your still white hands that lie
upon your breast,
For mine do beat the dark all night and never find
me rest;
They grope among the shadows an' they beat the
cold black air,
They go seekin' in the darkness, an' they never
find him there,
They never find him there.

Grandmither, gie me your sightless eyes, that I
may never see
His own a-burnin' full o' love that must not shine
for me.
Grandmither, gie me your peaceful lips, white as
the kirkyard snow,
For mine be tremblin' wi' the wish that he must
never know.
Grandmither, gie me your clay-stopped ears, that
I may never hear
My lad a-singin' in the night when I am sick wi'
fear;
A-singin' when the moonlight over a' the land is
white—
Ah, God! I'll up and go to him, a-singin' in the
night,
A-callin' in the night.

Grandmither, gie me your clay-cold heart, that
has forgot to ache,
For mine be fire wi'in my breast an' yet it cannot
break.

Wi' every beat it's callin' for things that must not be,—
So can ye not let me creep in an' rest awhile by ye?
A little lass afeard o' dark slept by ye years agone—
An' she has found what night can hold 'twixt sunset an' the dawn:
So when I plant the rose an' rue above your grave for ye,
Ye'll know it's under rue an' rose that I would like to be,
That I would like to be.

WILLA SIBERT CATHER.

ISAIAH BEETHOVEN*

THEY told me I had three months to live,
So I crept to Bernadotte,
And sat by the mill for hours and hours
Where the gathered waters deeply moving
Seemed not to move:
O world, that's you!
You are but a widened place in the river
Where Life looks down and we rejoice for her
Mirrored in us, and so we dream
And turn away, but when again
We look for the face, behold the low-lands
And blasted cotton-wood trees where we empty
Into the larger stream!
But here by the mill the castled clouds

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Mocked themselves in the dizzy water;
And over its agate floor at night
The flame of the moon ran under my eyes
Amid a forest stillness broken
By a flute in a hut on the hill.
At last when I came to lie in bed
Weak and in pain, with the dreams about me,
The soul of the river had entered my soul,
And the gathered power of my soul was moving
So swiftly it seemed to be at rest
Under cities of cloud and under
Spheres of silver and changing worlds—
Until I saw a flash of trumpets
Above the battlements over Time!

EDGAR LEE MASTERS.

SOULS*

MY SOUL goes clad in gorgeous things,
Scarlet and gold and blue;
And at her shoulder sudden wings
Like long flames flicker through.

And she is swallow-fleet, and free
From mortal bonds and bars.
She laughs, because Eternity
Blossoms for her with stars!

O folk who scorn my stiff gray gown,
My dull and foolish face,
Can ye not see my Soul flash down,
A singing flame through space?

*Used by permission of the author and the publisher, The Macmillan Company.

And folk, whose earth-stained looks I hate,
Why may I not divine
Your Souls, that must be passionate,
Shining and swift, as mine!

FANNIE STEARNS DAVIS.

THE FORGOTTEN SOUL

'TWAS I that cried against the pane on All Souls' Night
(O pulse of my heart's life, how could you never hear?)
You filled the room I knew with yellow candle-light
And cheered the lass beside you when she cried in fear,

'Twas I that went beside you in the gray woodmist
(O core of my heart's heart, how could you never know?)
You only frowned and shuddered as you bent and kissed
The lass hard by you, handfast, as I used to go.

'Twas I that stood to greet you on the churchyard pave
(O fire of my heart's grief, how could you never see?)
You smiled in careless dreaming as you crossed my grave
And hummed a little love-song where they buried me!

MARGARET WIDDEMER.

A DEAD HARVEST

In Kensington Gardens

ALONG the graceless grass of town
They rake the rows of red and brown—
Dead leaves, unlike the rows of hay
Delicate, touched with gold and grey,
Raked long ago and far away.

A narrow silence in the park,
Between the lights a narrow dark.
One street rolls on the north; and one,
Muffled, upon the south doth run;
Amid the mist the work is done.

A futile crop! for it the fire
Smoulders, and, for a stack, a pyre.
So go the town's lives on the breeze,
Even as the sheddings of the trees;
Bosom nor barn is filled with these.

ALICE MEYNELL.

VICKERY'S MOUNTAIN*

BLUE in the west the mountain stands,
And through the long twilight
Vickery sits with folded hands,
And Vickery's eyes are bright.

*From "The Town Down the River," copyright, 1910, by Charles Scribner's Sons. By permission of the publishers.

Bright, for he knows what no man else
On earth as yet may know:
There's a golden word that he never tells,
And a gift that he will not show.

He dreams of honor and wealth and fame,
He smiles, and well he may;
For to Vickery once a sick man came
Who did not go away.

The day before the day to be,
"Vickery," said the guest,
"You know as you live what's left of me—
And you shall know the rest.

"You know as you live that I have come
To what we call the end.
No doubt you have found me troublesome.
But you've also found a friend;

"For we shall give and you shall take
The gold that is in view;
The mountain there and I shall make
A golden man of you.

"And you shall leave a friend behind
Who neither frets nor feels;
And you shall move among your kind
With hundreds at your heels.

"Now this that I have written here
Tells all that need be told;
So, Vickery, take the way that's clear,
And be a man of gold."

Vickery turned his eyes again
To the far mountain-side,
And wept a tear for worthy men
Defeated and defied.

Since then a crafty score of years
Have come, and they have gone;
But Vickery counts no lost arrears:
He lingers and lives on.

Blue in the west the mountain stands,
Familiar as a face.
Blue, but Vickery knows what sands
Are golden at its base.

He dreams and lives upon the day
When he shall walk with kings.
Vickery smiles—and well he may:
The life-caged linnet sings.

Vickery thinks the time will come
To go for what is his;
But hovering, unseen hands at home
Will hold him where he is.

There's a golden word that he never tells
And a gift that he will not show.
All to be given to some one else—
And Vickery not to know.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON.

BLUE SQUILLS

HOW many million Aprils came
Before I ever knew
How white a cherry bough could be,
A bed of squills, how blue!

And many a dancing April
When life is done with me,
Will lift the blue flame of the flower
And the white flame of the tree.

Oh burn me with your beauty, then,
Oh hurt me, tree and flower,
Lest in the end death try to take
Even this glistening hour.

O shaken flowers, O shimmering trees,
O sunlit white and blue,
Wound me, that I, through endless sleep,
May bear the scar of you.

SARA TEASDALE.

A LOVE SONG

MY LOVE should be silent, being deep—
And being very peaceful should be still-
Still as the utmost depths of ocean keep—
Serenely silent as some mighty hill.

Yet is my love so great it needs must fill
With very joy the inmost heart of me,
The joy of dancing branches on the hill
The joy of leaping waves upon the sea.

THEODOSIA GARRISON.

SONG IS SO OLD

SONG is so old,
Love is so new—
Let me be still
And kneel to you.

Let me be still
And breathe no word,
Save what my warm blood
Sings unheard.

Let my warm blood
Sing low of you—
Song is so fair,
Love is so new!

HERMANN HAGEDORN.

SENTENCE*

SHALL I say that what heaven gave
Earth has taken?—
Or that sleepers in the grave
Reawaken?

One sole sentence can I know,
Can I say;
You, my comrade, had to go,
I to stay.

WITTER BYNNER.

THE GHOSTLY GALLEY†

WHEN comes the ghostly galley
Whose rowers dip the oar
Without a sound to startle us,
Unheeding on the shore,—

If they should beckon you aboard
Before they beckon me,
How could I bear the waiting time
Till I should put to sea!

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE.

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*From "Grenstone Poems," published by Alfred A. Knopf.

†From "The Door of Dreams," published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

CHECK

THE night was creeping on the ground;
She crept and did not make a sound
Until she reached the tree, and then
She covered it, and stole again
Along the grass beside the wall.

I heard the rustle of her shawl
As she threw blackness everywhere
Upon the sky and ground and air,
And in the room where I was hid:
But no matter what she did
To everything that was without,
She could not put my candle out.

So I stared at the night, and she
Stared back solemnly at me.

JAMES STEPHENS.

BIRTHRIGHT*

LORD Rameses of Egypt sighed
Because a summer evening passed;
And little Ariadne cried
That summer fancy fell at last
To dust; and young Verona died
When beauty's hour was overcast.

*Used by permission of the author and of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Theirs was the bitterness we know
  Because the clouds of hawthorn keep
So short a state, and kisses go
  To tombs unfathomably deep,
While Rameses and Romeo
  And little Ariadne sleep.

JOHN DRINKWATER.

THE GIPSY GIRL

"COME, try your skill, kind gentlemen,
  A penny for three tries!"
Some threw and lost, some threw and won
A ten-a-penny prize.

She was a tawny gipsy girl
A girl of twenty years,
I liked her for the lumps of gold
That jingled from her ears;

I liked the flaring yellow scarf
Bound loose about her throat,
I liked her showy purple gown
And flashy velvet coat.

A man came up, too loose of tongue,
And said no good to her;
She did not blush as Saxons do,
Or turn upon the cur;

She fawned and whined "Sweet gentleman,
A penny for three tries!"
—But oh, the den of wild things in
The darkness of her eyes!

RALPH HODGSON.

THE BALLAD OF CAMDEN TOWN

I WALKED with Maisie long years back
The streets of Camden Town,
I splendid in my suit of black,
And she divine in brown.

Hers was a proud and noble face,
A secret heart and eyes
Like water in a lonely place
Beneath unclouded skies.

A bed, a chest, a faded mat,
And broken chairs a few,
Were all we had to grace our flat
In Hazel Avenue.

But I could walk to Hampstead Heath,
And crown her head with daisies,
And watch the streaming world beneath,
And men with other Maisies.

When I was ill and she was pale
And empty stood our store,
She left the latch key on its nail,
And saw me nevermore.

Perhaps she cast herself away
Lest both of us should drown:
Perhaps she feared to die, as they
Who die in Camden Town.

What 'came of her? The bitter nights
Destroy the rose and lily,
And souls are lost among the lights
Of painted Piccadilly.

What 'came of her? The river flows
So deep and wide and stilly,
And waits to catch the fallen rose
And clasp the broken lily.

I dream she dwells in London still
And breathes the evening air,
And often walk to Primrose Hill,
And hope to meet her there.

Once more together we will live,
For I will find her yet;
I have so little to forgive;
So much I can't forget.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER.

DUST

WHEN the white flame in us is gone,
And we that lost the world's delight
Stiffen in darkness, left alone
To crumble in our separate night;

When your swift hair is quiet in death,
And through the lips corruption thrust
Has stilled the labor of my breath—
When we are dust, when we are dust!

Not dead, not undesirous yet,
  Still sentient, still unsatisfied,
We'll ride the air, and shine, and flit,
  Around the places where we died,

And dance as dust before the sun,
  And light of foot, and unconfined,
Hurry from road to road, and run
  About the errands of the wind.

And every mote, on earth or air,
  Will speed and gleam, down later days,
And like a secret pilgrim fare
  By eager and invisible ways.

Nor ever rest, nor ever lie,
  Till, beyond thinking, out of view,
One mote of all the dust that's I
  Shall meet one atom that was you.

Then in some garden hushed from wind,
  Warm in a sunset's afterglow,
The lovers in the flowers will find
  A sweet and strange unquiet grow

Upon the peace; and, past desiring
  So high a beauty in the air,
And such a light, and such a quiring,
  And such a radiant ecstasy there.

They'll know not if it's fire, or dew,
  Or out of earth, or in the height,
Singing, or flame, or scent, or hue,
  Or two that pass, in light, to light.

Out of the garden higher, higher . . .
  But in that instant they shall learn
The shattering ecstasy of our fire,
  And the weak passionless hearts will burn

And faint in that amazing glow,
  Until the darkness close above;
And they will know—poor fools, they'll know!—
  One moment, what it is to love.

RUPERT BROOKE.

NOVEMBER 19

A DESCRIPTION OF VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA doth afford many excellent vegetables, and living Creatures, yet grasse there is little or none, but what groweth in low Marishes: for all the Countrey is overgrowne with trees, whose droppings continually turneth their grasse to weeds, by reason of the ranckness of the ground, which would soone be amended by good husbandry. The wood that is most common is Oke and Walnut, many of their Okes are so tall & straight, that they will bare two foote and a halfe square of good timber for 20 yards long; Of this wood there is two or three severall kinds. The Acornes of one kinde, whose barke is more white then the other, & somewhat sweetish, which being boyled, at last affords a sweet oyle, that they keepe in gourds to annoint their heads and joynts. The fruit they eat made in bread or otherwise. There is also some Elme, some blacke Walnut tree, and some Ash: of Ash and Elme they make sope Ashes. If the trees be very great, the Ashes will be good, and melt to hard lumps, but if they be small, it will be but powder, and not so good as the other. Of walnuts there is 2 or 3 kindes; there is a kinde of wood we called Cypres, because

both the wood, the fruit, and leafe did most resemble it, and of those trees there are some neare three fadome about at the foot, very straight, and 50, 60, or 80 foot without a branch. By the dwelling of the Salvages are some great Mulberry trees, and in some parts of the Country, they are found growing naturally in prettie groves. There was an assay made to make silke, and surely the wormes prospered excellent well, till the master workeman fell sicke. During which time they were eaten with Rats.

In some parts were found some Chesnuts, whose wild fruit equalize the best in France, Spaine, Germany, or Italy. Plums there are of three sorts. The red and white are like our hedge plums, but the other which they call Putchamins, grow as high as a Palmeta: the fruit is like a Medler; it is first greene, then yellow, and red when it is ripe; if it be not ripe, it will draw a mans mouth awry, with much torment, but when it is ripe, it is as delicious as an Apricot.

They have Cherries, and those are much like a Damson, but for their tastes and color we called them Cherries. We saw some few Crabs, but very small and bitter. Of vines great abundance in many parts that climbe the toppes of the highest trees in some places, but these beare but few grapes. Except by the rivers & savage habitations, where they are not overshadowed from the sunne, they are covered with fruit, though never pruined nor manured. Of those hedge grapes we made neere twentie gallons of wine, which was

like our French Brittish wine, but certainely they would prove good were they well manured. There is another sort of grape neere as great as a Cherry, this they call Messamins, they be fatte, and the juyce thicke. Neither doth the taste so well please when they are made in wine. They have a small fruit growing on little trees, husked like a chesnut, but the fruit most like a very small Acorne. This they call Chechinquamins, which they esteeme a great daintie. They have a berry much like our Gooseberry, in greatnesse, color, and tast; those they call Rawcomens, and doe eat them raw or boyled. Of these naturall fruits they live a great part of the yeare, which they use in this manner; The Walnuts, Chesnuts, Acornes, and Chechinquamins are dryed to keepe. When they need walnuts they breake them betweene two stones, yet some part of the shels will cleave to the fruit. Then doe they dry them againe upon a Mat over a hurdle. After they put it into a morter of wood, and beat it very small: that done they mix it with water, that the shels may sinke to the bottome. This water will be colored as milke, which they call Pawcohiccora, and keepe it for their use. The fruit like Medlers they call Putchamins, they cast upon hurdles on a Mat, and preserve them as Pruines. Of their Chesnuts and Chechinquamins boyled, they make both broath and bread for their chiefe men, or at their greatest feasts. Besides those fruit trees, there is a white Popular, and another tree like unto it, that yeeldeth a very cleare and an odoriferous

Gumme like Turpentine, which some called Balson. There are also Cedars and Saxafras trees. They also yeeld gummes in a small proportion of themselves. Wee tryed conclusions to extract it out of the wood, but nature afforded more then our arts.

In the watry valleyes groweth a Berry which they call Ocoughtanamnis very much like unto Capers. These they dry in sommer. When they eat them they boile them neare halfe a day; for otherwise they differ not much from poyson. Mattoum groweth as our Bents. The seed is not much unlike to Rie, though much smaller. This they use for a daintie bread buttered with deare suet.

During Sommer there are either Strawberries, which ripen in Aprill, or Mulberries which ripen in May and June. Raspises, hurts; or a fruit that the inhabitants call Maracocks, which is a pleasant wholsome fruit much like a Lemond. Many herbes in the spring are commonly dispersed throughout the woods, good for brothes and sallets, as Violets, Purslain, Sorrell, &c. Besides many we used whose names we know not.

The chiefe root they have for food is called Tockawhoughe. It groweth like a flagge in Marishes. In one day a Salvage will gather sufficient for a weeke. These roots are much of the greatnesse and taste of Potatoes. They use to cover a great many of them with Oke leaves and Ferne, and then cover all with earth in the manner of a Colepit; over it, on each side, they continue a great fire 24 houres before they dare

eat it. Raw it is no better then poyson, and being rosted, except it be tender and the heat abated, or sliced and dryed in the Sunne, mixed with sorrell and meale or such like, it will prickle and torment the throat extremely, and yet in sommer they use this ordinarily for bread.

They have another roote which they call Wighsacan: as th'other feedeth the body, so this cureth their hurts and diseases. It is a small root which they bruise and apply to the wound. Pocones is a small root that groweth in the mountines, which being dryed and beate in powdder turneth red. And this they use for swellings, aches, annointing their joynts, painting their heads and garments. They account it very precious, and of much worth. Musquaspen is a roote of the bignesse of a finger, and as red as bloud. In drying, it will wither almost to nothing. This they use to paint their Mattes, Targets, and such like.

There is also Pellitory of Spaine, Sasafrage, and divers other simples, which the Apothecaries gathered, and commended to be good, and medicinable.

In the low Marishes grow plots of Onyons, containing an Acre of ground or more in many places; but they are small, not past the bignesse of the toppe of ones Thumbe.

Of beasts the chiefe are Deere, nothing differing from ours. In the deserts towards the heads of the rivers, there are many, but amongst the rivers few. There is a beast they call Aroughcun, much like a badger, but useth to live on trees as Squirrels

doe. Their Squirrels some are neare as great as our smallest sort of wilde Rabbets, some blackish or blacke and white, but the most are gray.

A small beast they have they call Assapanick, but we call them flying Squirrels, because spreading their legs, and so stretching the largenesse of their skins, that they have beene seene to fly 30 or 40 yards. An Opassom hath a head like a Swine, and a taile like a Rat, and is of the bignesse of a Cat. Under her belly shee hath a bagge, wherein she lodgeth, carrieth, and suckleth her young. A Mussacus is a beast of the forme and nature of our water Rats, but many of them smell exceeding strongly of Muske. Their Hares no bigger then our Conies, and few of them to be found.

Their Beares are very little in comparison of those of Muscovia and Tartaria. The Beaver is as big as an ordinary water dog, but his legs exceeding short. His forefeete like a dogs. his hinder feet like a Swans. His taile somewhat like the forme of a Racket, bare without haire, which to eat the Salvages esteeme a great delicate. They have many Otters, which as the Beavers they take with snares, and esteeme the skins greater ornaments, and of all those beasts they use to feed when they catch them. An Utchunquoyes is like a wilde Cat. Their Foxes are like our silver haired Conies, of a small proportion, and not smelling like those in England. Their Dogges of that Country are like their Woolves; and cannot barke but howle, and the Woolves

not much bigger then our English Foxes. Martins, Powlecats, Weesels, and Minks we know they have because we have seene many of their skinnes, though very seldome any of them alive. But one thing is strange, that we could never perceive their Vermine destroy our Hennes, Egges, nor Chickens, nor doe any hirt, nor their flyes nor serpents any way pernicious, where in the South parts of America they are alwayes dangerous, and often deadly.

Of Birds the Eagle is the greatest devourer. Hawkes there be of divers sorts, as our Falconers called them: Sparrow-hawkes, Lanarets, Goshawks, Falcons, and Osperayes, but they all prey most upon fish. Their Partridges are little bigger then our Quailes. Wilde Turkies are as bigge as our tame. There are Woosels or Blackbirds with red shoulders, Thrushes and divers sorts of small Birds, some red, some blew, scarce so bigge as a Wrenne, but few in Sommer. In Winter there are great plentie of Swans, Cranes, gray and white with blacke wings, Herons, Geese, Brants, Ducke, Wigeon, Dotterell, Oxeies, Parrats, and Pigeons. Of all those sorts great abundance, and some other strange kinds, to us unknown by name. But in Sommer not any, or a very few to be seene.

Of fish we were best acquainted with Sturgeon, Grampus, Porpus, Seales, Stingraies, whose tailes are very dangerous. Bretts, Mullets, white Salmonds, Trowts, Soles, Plaice, Herrings, Conyfish, Rockfish, Eeles, Lampreys, Catfish, Shades, Pearch of three sorts, Crabs, Shrimps, Crevices, Oysters,

Cocles, and Muscles. But the most strange fish is a small one, so like the picture of St. George his Dragon, as possible can be, except his legs and wings, and the Toadefish, which will swell till it be like to burst, when it commeth into the ayre.

Concerning the entrailes of the earth, little can be said for certaintie. There wanted good Refiners; for those that tooke upon them to have skill this way, tooke up the washings from the mountaines, and some moskered shining stones and spangles which the waters brought downe, flattering themselves in their owne vaine conceits to have beene supposed what they were not, by the meanes of that ore, if it proved as their arts and judgements expected. Onely this is certaine, that many regions lying in the same latitude, afford Mines very rich of divers natures. The crust also of these rockes would easily perswade a man to beleeve there are other Mines then yron and steele, if there were but meanes and men of experience that knew the Mine from Spar.

Of Their Planted Fruits in Virginia, and How They Use Them.

They divide the yeare into five seasons. Their winter some call Popanow, the spring Cattapeuk, the sommer Cohattahough, the earing of their Corne Nepinough, the harvest and fall of leafe Taquitock. From September untill the midst of November are the chiefe feasts & sacrifice. Then have they plentie of fruits as well planted as

naturall, as corne, greene and ripe, fish, fowle, and wilde beasts exceeding fat.

The greatest labor they take, is in planting their corne, for the Country naturally is overgrowne with wood. To prepare the ground they bruise the barke of the trees neare the root, then doe they scortch the roots with fire that they grow no more. The next yeare with a crooked peece of wood they beat up the weeds by the rootes and in that mould they plant their Corne. Their manner is this. They make a hole in the earth with a sticke, and into it they put foure graines of wheate and two of beanes. These holes they make foure foote one from another; Their women and children do continually keepe it with weeding, and when it is growne middle high, they hill it about like a hop-yard.

In Aprill they begin to plant, but their chiefe plantation is in May, and so they continue till the midst of June. What they plant in Aprill they reape in August, for May in September, for June in October; Every stalke of their corne commonly beareth two ears, some three, seldome any foure, many but one, and some none. Every eare ordinarily hath betwixt 200 and 500 graines. The stalke being greene, hath a sweet juice in it, somewhat like a sugar Cane, which is the cause that when they gather their corne greene, they sucke the stalkes; for as we gather greene pease, so doe they their corne being greene, which excelleth their old. They plant also pease they call Assentamens, which are the same they call in Italy,

Fagioli. Their Beanes are the same the Turkes call Garnanses, but these they much esteeme for dainties.

Their corne they rost in the eare greene, and bruising it in a morter of wood with a Polt, lap it in rowle in the leaves of their corne, and so boyle it for a daintie. They also reserve that corne late planted that will not ripe, by roasting it in hot ashes, the heat thereof drying it. In winter they esteeme it being boyled with beanes for a rare dish, they call Pausarowmena. Their old wheat they first steepe a night in hot water, in the morning punding it in a morter. They use a small basket for their Temmes, then pound againe the great, and so separating by dashing their hand in the basket, receive the flower in a platter made of wood, scraped to that forme with burning and shels. Tempering this flower with water, they make it either in cakes, covering them with ashes till they be baked, and then washing them in faire water, they drie presently with their owne heat: or else boyle them in water, eating the broth the bread which they call Ponap. The groutes and peeces of the cornes remaning, by fanning in a Platter or in the wind away the branne, they boyle 3 or 4 houres with water, which is an ordinary food they call Ustatahamen. But some more thriftie then cleanly, doe burne the core of the eare to powder, which they call Pungnough, mingling that in their meale, but it never tasted well in bread, nor broth. Their fish & flesh they boyle either very tenderly, or boyle it so long on hurdles

over the fire, or else after the Spanish fashion, putting it on a spit, they turne first the one side, then the other, till it be as drie as their jerkin Beefe in the west Indies, that they may keepe it a moneth or more without putrifying. The broth of fish or flesh they eat as commonly as the meat.

In May also amongst their corne they plant Pupeons, and a fruit like unto a muske mellon, but lesse and worse, which they call Macocks. They increase exceedingly and ripen in the beginning of July, and continue untill September. They plant also Maracocks a wild fruit like a Lemmon, which also increase infinitely. They begin to ripe in September, and continue till the end of October. When all their fruits be gathered, little els they plant, and this is done by their women and children; neither doth this long suffice them, for neare three parts of the yeare, they onely observe times and seasons, and live of what the Country naturally affordeth from hand to mouth, &c.

The Commodities in Virginia, or That May Be Had by Industrie

The mildnesse of the ayre, the fertilitie of the soyle, and situation of the rivers are so propitious to the nature and use of man, as no place is more convenient for pleasure, profit, and mans sustenance, under that latitude or climat. Here will live any beasts, as horses, goats, sheepe, asses,

hens, &c. as appeared by them that were carried thether. The waters, Isles, and shoales, are full of safe harbors for ships of warre or marchandize, for boats of all sorts, for transportation of fishing, &c. The Bay and rivers have much marchantable fish, and places fit for Salt coats, building of ships, making of Iron, &c.

Muscovia and Polonia doe yearely receive many thousands, for pitch, tarre, sope-ashes, Rosen, Flax, Cordage, Sturgeon, Masts, Yards, Wainscot, Firres, Glasse, and such like; also Swethland for Iron and Copper. France in like manner, for Wine, Canvas, and Salt. Spaine as much for Iron, Steele, Figges, Reasons, and Sackes. Italy with Silkes and Velvets consumes our chiefe Commodities. Holland maintaines it selfe by fishing and trading at our owne doores. All these temporize with other for necessities, but all as uncertaine as peace or warres. Besides the charge, travell, and danger in transporting them, by seas, lands, stormes and Pyrats. Then how much hath Virginia the prerogative of all those flourishing Kingdomes, for the benefit of our Land, when as within one hundred myles all those are to be had, either ready provided by nature, or else to be prepared, were there but industrious men to labor. Onely of Copper we may doubt is wanting, but there is good probabilitie that both Copper and better Minerals are there to be had for their labor. Other Countries have it. So then here is a place, a nurse for souldiers, a practise for mariners, a trade for marchants, a reward for the

good, and that which is most of all, a businesse (most acceptable to God) to bring such poore Infidels to the knowledge of God and his holy Gospell.

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH.

NOVEMBER 20

(Selma Lagerlöf, born November 20, 1858)

THE BALL AT EKEBY*

AH, WOMEN of the olden times!

To speak of you is to speak of the kingdom of heaven; you were all beauties, ever bright, ever young, ever lonely and gentle as a mother's eyes when she looks down on her child. Soft as young squirrels you hung on your husband's neck. Your voice never trembled with anger, no frowns ruffled your brow, your white hand was never harsh and hard. You, sweet saints, like adored images stood in the temple of home. Incense and prayers were offered you, through you love worked its wonders, and round your temples poetry wreathed its gold, gleaming glory.

Ah, women of the past, this is the story of how one of you gave Gösta Berling her love.

Two weeks after the ball at Borg there was one at Ekeby.

What a feast it was! Old men and women become young again, smile and rejoice, only in speaking of it.

The pensioners were masters at Ekeby at that time. The major's wife went about the country

*From "The Story of Gösta Berling."

with beggar's wallet and crutch, and the major lived at Sjö. He could not even be present at the ball, for at Sjö small-pox had broken out, and he was afraid to spread the infection.

What pleasures those twelve hours contained, from the pop of the first cork at the dinner-table to the last wail of the violins, long after midnight.

They have sunk into the background of time, those crowned hours, made magical by the most fiery wines, by the most delicate food, by the most inspiring music, by the wittiest of theatricals, by the most beautiful tableaux. They have sunk away, dizzy with the dizziest dance. Where are to be found such polished floors, such courtly knights, such lovely women?

Ah, women of the old days, you knew well how to adorn a ball. Streams of fire, of genius, and youthful vigor thrilled each and all who approached you. It was worth wasting one's gold on wax-candles to light up your loveliness, on wine to instil gayety into your hearts; it was worth dancing soles to dust and rubbing stiff arms which had drawn the fiddle-bows for your sakes.

Ah, women of the olden days, it was you who owned the key to the door of Paradise.

The halls of Ekeby are crowded with the loveliest of your lovely throng. There is the young Countess Dohna, sparklingly gay and eager for game and dance, as befits her twenty years; there are the lovely daughters of the judge of Munkerud, and the lively young ladies from Berga; there is

Anna Stjärnhök, a thousand times more beautiful than ever before, with that gentle dreaminess which had come over her ever since the night she had been hunted by wolves; there are many more, who are not yet forgotten but soon will be; and there is the beautiful Marianne Sinclair.

She, the famed queen of beauty, who had shone at royal courts, who had travelled the land over and received homage everywhere, she who lighted the spark of love wherever she showed herself—she had deigned to come to the pensioners' ball.

At that time Värmland's glory was at its height, borne up by many proud names. Much had the beautiful land's happy children to be proud of, but when they named their glories they never neglected to speak of Marianne Sinclair.

The tales of her conquests filled the land.

They spoke of the coronets which had floated over her head, of the millions which had been laid at her feet, of the warriors' swords and poets' wreaths whose splendor had tempted her.

And she possessed not only beauty. She was witty and learned. The cleverest men of the day were glad to talk with her. She was not an author herself, but many of her ideas, which she had put into the souls of her poet-friends, lived again in song.

In Värmland, in the land of the bear, she seldom stayed. Her life was spent in perpetual journeyings. Her father, the rich Melchior Sinclair, remained at home at Björne and let Marianne go to her noble friends in the large towns or at the great

country-seats. He had his pleasure in telling of all the money she wasted, and both the old people lived happy in the splendor of Marianne's glowing existence.

Her life was a life of pleasures and homage. The air about her was love—love her light and lamp, love her daily bread.

She, too, had often loved, often, often; but never had that fire lasted long enough to forge the chains which bind for life.

"I wait for him, the irresistible," she used to say of love. "Hitherto he has not climbed over several ramparts, nor swum through several trenches. He has come tamely, without wildness in his eye and madness in his heart. I wait for the conqueror, who shall take me out of myself. I will feel love so strong within me that I must tremble before him; now I know only the love at which my good sense laughs."

Her presence gave fire to talk, life to the wine. Her glowing spirit set the fiddle-bows going, and the dance floated in sweeter giddiness than before over the floor which she had touched with her feet. She was radiant in the tableaux, she gave genius to the comedy, her lovely lips——

Ah, hush, it was not her fault, she never meant to do it! It was the balcony, it was the moonlight, the lace veil, the knightly dress, the song, which were to blame. The poor young creatures were innocent.

All that which led to so much unhappiness was with the best intentions. Master Julius, who could

do anything, had arranged a tableau especially that Marianne might shine in full glory.

In the theater, which was set up in the great drawing room at Ekeby, sat the hundred guests and looked at the picture, Spain's yellow moon wandering through a dark night sky. A Don Juan came stealing along Sevilla's street and stopped under an ivy-clad balcony. He was disguised as a monk, but one could see an embroidered cuff under the sleeve, and a gleaming sword-point under the mantle's hem.

He raised his voice in song:

"I kiss the lips of no fair maid,
Nor wet mine with the foaming wine
Within the beaker's gold.
A cheek upon whose rose-leaf shade
Mine eyes have lit a glow divine,
A look which shyly seeketh mine,—
These leave me still and cold.

"Ah, come not in thy beauty's glow,
Señora, through yon terrace-door;
I fear when thou art nigh!
Cope and stole my shoulders know,
The Virgin only I adore,
And water-jugs hold comfort's store;
For ease to them I fly."

As he finished, Marianne came out on the balcony, dressed in black velvet and lace veil. She leaned over the balustrade and sang slowly and ironically:

"Why tarry thus, thou holy man
Beneath my window late or long?
Dost pray for my soul's weal?"

Then suddenly, warmly and eagerly:—

"Ah, flee, begone while yet you can!
Your gleaming sword sticks forth so long.
And plainly, spite your holy song,
The spurs clank on your heel."

At these words the monk cast off his disguise, and Gösta Berling stood under the balcony in a knight's dress of silk and gold. He heeded not the beauty's warning, but climbed up one of the balcony supports, swung himself over the balustrade, and, just as Master Julius had arranged it, fell on his knees at the lovely Marianne's feet.

Graciously she smiled on him, and gave him her hand to kiss, and while the two young people gazed at one another, absorbed in their love, the curtain fell.

And before her knelt Gösta Berling, with a face tender as a poet's and bold as a soldier's, with deep eyes, which glowed with wit and genius, which implored and constrained. Supple and full of strength was he, fiery and captivating.

While the curtain went up and down, the two stood always in the same position. Gösta's eyes held the lovely Marianne fast; they implored; they constrained.

Then the applause ceased; the curtain hung quiet; no one saw them.

Then the beautiful Marianne bent down and kissed Gösta Berling. She did not know why, she had to. He stretched up his arms about her head and held her fast. She kissed him again and again.

But it was the balcony, it was the moonlight, it was the lace veil, the knightly dress, the song, the applause, which were to blame. They had not wished it. She had not thrust aside the crowns which had hovered over her head, and spurned the millions which lay at her feet, out of love for Gösta Berling; nor had he already forgotten Anna Stjärnhök. No; they were blameless; neither of them had wished it.

It was the gentle Löwenborg, he with the fear in his eye and the smile on his lips, who that day was curtain-raiser. Distracted by the memory of many sorrows, he noticed little of the things of this world, and had never learned to look after them rightly. When he now saw that Gösta and Marianne had taken a new position, he thought that it also belonged to the tableau, and so he began to drag on the curtain string.

The two on the balcony observed nothing until a thunder of applause greeted them.

Marianne started back and wished to flee, but Gösta held her fast, whispering:

"Stand still; they think it belongs to the tableau."

He felt how her body shook with shuddering, and how the fire of her kisses died out on her lips.

"Do not be afraid," he whispered; "lovely lips have a right to kiss."

They had to stand while the curtain went up and went down, and each time the hundreds of eyes saw them, hundreds of hands thundered out a stormy applause.

For it was beautiful to see two fair young people represent love's happiness. No one could think that those kisses were anything but stage delusion. No one guessed that the señor shook with embarrassment and the knight with uneasiness. No one could think that it did not all belong to the tableau.

At last Marianne and Gösta stood behind the scenes.

She pushed her hair back from her forehead.

"I don't understand myself," she said.

"Fie! for shame, Miss Marianne," said he, grimacing, and stretched out his hands. "To kiss Gösta Berling, shame on you!"

Marianne had to laugh.

"Every one knows that Gösta Berling is irresistible. My fault is no greater than others'."

And they agreed to put a good face on it, so that no one should suspect the truth.

"Can I be sure that the truth will never come out, Herr Gösta?" she asked, before they went out among the guests.

"That you can. Gentlemen can hold their tongues. I promise you that."

She dropped her eyes. A strange smile curved her lips.

"If the truth should come out, what would people think of me, Herr Gösta?"

"They would not think anything. They would know that it meant nothing. They would think that we entered into our parts and were going on with the play."

Yet another question, with lowered lids and with the same forced smile,

"But you yourself? What do you think about it, Herr Gösta?"

"I think that you are in love with me," he jested.

"Think no such thing," she smiled, "for then I must run you through with my stiletto to show you that you are wrong."

"Women's kisses are precious," said Gösta. "Does it cost one's life to be kissed by Marianne Sinclair?"

A glance flashed on him from Marianne's eyes, so sharp that it felt like a blow.

"I could wish to see you dead, Gösta Berling! dead! dead!"

These words revived the old longing in the poet's blood.

"Ah," he said, "would that those words were more than words!—that they were arrows which came whistling from some dark ambush; that they were daggers or poison, and had the power to destroy this wretched body and set my soul free!"

She was calm and smiling now.

"Childishness!" she said, and took his arm to join the guests.

They kept their costumes, and their triumphs

were renewed when they showed themselves in front of the scenes. Every one complimented them. No one suspected anything.

The ball began again, but Gösta escaped from the ballroom.

His heart ached from Marianne's glance, as if it had been wounded by sharp steel. He understood too well the meaning of her words.

It was a disgrace to love him; it was a disgrace to be loved by him, a shame worse than death.

He would never dance again. He wished never to see them again, those lovely women.

He knew it too well. Those beautiful eyes, those red cheeks burned not for him. Not for him floated those light feet, nor rung that low laugh.

Yes, dance with him, flirt with him, that they could do, but not one of them would be his in earnest.

The poet went into the smoking-room to the old men, and sat down by one of the card-tables. He happened to throw himself down by the same table where the powerful master of Björne sat and played "baccarat" holding the bank with a great pile of silver in front of him.

The play was already high. Gösta gave it an even greater impulse. Green bank-notes appeared, and always the pile of money grew in front of the powerful Melchior Sinclair.

But before Gösta also gathered both coins and notes, and soon he was the only one who held out in the struggle against the great land-owner at

Björne. Soon the great pile of money changed over from Melchior Sinclair to Gösta Berling.

"Gösta, my boy," cried the land-owner, laughing, when he had played away everything he had in his pocket-book and purse, "what shall we do now? I am bankrupt, and I never play with borrowed money. I promised my wife that."

He discovered a way. He played away his watch and his beaver coat, and was just going to stake his horse and sledge when Sintram checked him.

"Stake something to win on," he advised him. "Stake something to run the luck."

"What the devil have I got?"

"Play your reddest heart's blood, brother Melchior. Stake your daughter!"

"You would never venture that," said Gösta, laughing. "That prize I would never get under my roof."

Melchior could not help laughing also. He could not endure that Marianne's name should be mentioned at the card-tables, but this was so insanely ridiculous that he could not be angry. To play away Marianne to Gösta, yes, that he certainly could venture.

"That is to say," he explained, "that if you can win her consent, Gösta, I will stake my blessing to the marriage on this card."

Gösta staked all his winnings and the play began. He won, and Sinclair stopped playing. He could not fight against such bad luck; he saw that.

The night slipped by; it was past midnight. The

lovely women's cheeks began to grow pale; curls hung straight, ruffles were crumpled. The old ladies rose up from the sofa-corners, and said that as they had been there twelve hours, it was about time for them to be thinking of home.

And the beautiful ball should be over, but then Lilliecrona himself seized the fiddle and struck up the last polka. The horses stood at the door; the old ladies were dressed in their cloaks and shawls; the old men wound their plaids about them and buckled their galoshes.

But the young people could not tear themselves from the dance. They danced in their outdoor wraps, and a mad dance it was. As soon as a girl stopped dancing with one partner, another came and dragged her away with him.

And even the sorrowful Gösta was dragged into the whirl. He hoped to dance away grief and humiliation; he wished to have the love of life in his blood again; he longed to be gay, he as well as the others. And he danced till the walls went round, and he no longer knew what he was doing.

Who was it he had got hold of in the crowd? She was light and supple, and he felt that streams of fire went from one to the other. Ah, Marianne!

While Gösta danced with Marianne, Sintram sat in his sledge before the door, and beside him stood Melchior Sinclair.

The great land-owner was impatient at being forced to wait for Marianne. He stamped in the snow with his great snow-boots and beat with his arms, for it was bitter cold.

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SELMA LAGERLÖF

"Perhaps you ought not to have played Marianne away to Gösta," said Sintram.

"What do you mean?"

Sintram arranged his reins and lifted his whip, before he answered:

"It did not belong to the tableau, that kissing."

The powerful land-owner raised his arm for a death-blow, but Sintram was already gone. He drove away, whipping the horse to a wild gallop without daring to look back, for Melchior Sinclair had a heavy hand and short patience.

He went now into the dancing-room to look for his daughter, and saw how Gösta and Marianne were dancing.

Wild and giddy was that last polka.

Some of the couples were pale, others glowing red, dust lay like smoke over the hall, the wax-candles gleamed, burned down to the sockets, and in the midst of all the ghostly ruin, they flew on, Gösta and Marianne, royal in their tireless strength, no blemish on their beauty, happy in the glorious motion.

Melchior Sinclair watched them for a while; but then he went and left Marianne to dance. He slammed the door, tramped down the stairs, and placed himself in the sledge, where his wife already waited, and drove home.

When Marianne stopped dancing and asked after her parents, they were gone.

When she was certain of this she showed no surprise. She dressed herself quietly and went out in

the yard. The ladies in the dressing-room thought that she drove in her own sledge.

She hurried in her thin satin shoes along the road without telling any one of her distress.

In the darkness no one recognized her, as she went by the edge of the road; no one could think that this late wanderer, who was driven up into the high drifts by the passing sledges, was the beautiful Marianne.

When she could go in the middle of the road she began to run. She ran as long as she was able, then walked for a while, then ran again. A hideous, torturing fear drove her on.

From Ekeby to Björne it cannot be farther than at most two miles. Marianne was soon at home, but she thought almost that she had come the wrong way. When she reached the house all the doors were closed, all the lights out; she wondered if her parents had not come home.

She went forward and twice knocked loudly on the front door. She seized the door-handle and shook it till the noise resounded through the whole house. No one came and opened, but when she let the iron go, which she had grasped with her bare hands, the fast-frozen skin was torn from them.

Melchior Sinclair had driven home in order to shut his door on his only child.

He was drunk with much drinking, wild with rage. He hated his daughter, because she liked Gösta Berling. He had shut the servants into the

kitchen, and his wife in the bedroom. With solemn oaths he told them that the one who let Marianne in, he would beat to a jelly. And they knew that he would keep his word.

No one had ever seen him so angry. Such a grief had never come to him before. Had his daughter come into his presence, he would perhaps have killed her.

Golden ornaments, silken dresses had he given her, wit and learning had been instilled in her. She had been his pride, his glory. He had been as proud of her as if she had worn a crown. Oh, his queen, his goddess, his honored, beautiful, proud Marianne! Had he ever denied her anything? Had he not always considered himself too common to be her father? Oh, Marianne, Marianne!

Ought he not to hate her, when she is in love with Gösta Berling and kisses him? Should he not cast her out, shut his door against her, when she will disgrace her greatness by loving such a man? Let her stay at Ekeby, let her run to the neighbors for shelter, let her sleep in the snowdrifts; it's all the same, she has already been dragged in the dirt, the lovely Marianne. The bloom is gone. The luster of life is gone.

He lies there in his bed, and hears how she beats on the door. What does that matter to him? He is asleep. Outside stands one who will marry a dismissed priest; he has no home for such a one. If he had loved her less, if he had been less proud of her, he could have let her come in.

Yes, his blessing he could not refuse them. He had played it away. But to open the door for her, that he would not do. Ah, Marianne!

The beautiful young woman still stood outside the door of her home. One minute she shook the lock in powerless rage, the next she fell on her knees, clasped her mangled hands, and begged for forgiveness.

But no one heard her, no one answered, no one opened to her.

Oh! was it not terrible? I am filled with horror as I tell of it. She came from a ball whose queen she had been! She had been proud, rich, happy; and in one minute she was cast into such an endless misery. Shut out from her home, exposed to the cold,—not scorned, not beaten, not cursed, but shut out with cold, immovable lovelessness.

Think of the cold, starlit night, which spread its arch above her, the great wide night with the empty, desolate snow-fields, with the silent woods. Everything slept, everything was sunk in painless sleep; only one living point in all that sleeping whiteness. All sorrow and pain and horror, which otherwise had been spread over the world, crept forward toward that one lonely point. O God, to suffer alone in the midst of this sleeping, ice-bound world!

For the first time in her life she met with unmercifulness and hardness. Her mother would not take the trouble to leave her bed to save her. The old servants, who had guided her first steps,

heard her and did not move a finger for her sake. For what crime was she punished?

Where should she find compassion, if not at this door? If she had been a murderess, she would still have knocked on it, knowing that they would forgive her. If she had sunk to being the most miserable of creatures, come wasted and in rags, she would still confidently have gone up to that door, and expected a loving welcome. That door was the entrance to her home; behind it she could only meet with love.

Had not her father tried her enough? Would they not soon open to her?

"Father, Father!" she called. "Let me come in! I freeze, I tremble. It is terrible out here!

"Mother, Mother! You who have gone so many steps to serve me, you who have watched so many nights over me, why do you sleep now? Mother, Mother, wake just this one night, and I will never give you pain again!"

She calls, and falls into breathless silence to listen for an answer. But no one heard her, no one obeyed her, no one answered.

Then she wrings her hands in despair, but there are no tears in her eyes.

The long, dark house with its closed doors and darkened windows lay awful and motionless in the night. What would become of her, who was homeless? Branded and dishonored was she, as long as she encumbered the earth. And her father himself pressed the red-hot iron deeper into her shoulders.

"Father," she called once more, "what will be-

come of me? People will believe the worst of me."

She wept and suffered; her body was stiff with cold.

Alas, that such misery can reach one, who but lately stood so high! It is so easy to be plunged into the deepest suffering! Should we not fear life? Who sails in a safe craft? Round about us swell sorrows like a heaving ocean; see how the hungry waves lick the ship's sides, see how they rage up over her. Ah, no safe anchorage, no solid ground, no steady ship, as far as the eye can see; only an unknown sky over an ocean of sorrow!

But hush! At last, at last! A light step comes through the hall.

"Is it Mother?" asked Marianne.

"Yes, my child."

"May I come in now?"

"Father will not let you come in."

"I have run in the snow-drifts in my thin shoes all the way from Ekeby. I have stood here an hour and knocked and called. I am freezing to death out here. Why did you drive away and leave me?"

"My child, my child, why did you kiss Gösta Berling?"

"But Father must have seen that I do not like him for that. It was in fun. Does he think that I will marry Gösta?"

"Go to the gardener's house, Marianne, and beg that you pass the night there. Your father is drunk. He will not listen to reason. He has kept me a prisoner up there. I crept out when I

thought he was asleep. He will kill me, if you come in."

"Mother, Mother, shall I go to strangers when I have a home? Are you as hard as Father? How can you allow me to be shut out? I will lay myself in the drift out here, if you do not let me in."

Then Marianne's mother laid her hand on the lock to open the door, but at the same moment a heavy step was heard on the stair, and a harsh voice called her.

Marianne listened: her mother hurried away, the harsh voice cursed her and then—

Marianne heard something terrible—she could hear every sound in the silent house.

She heard the thud of a blow, a blow with a stick or a box on the ear; then she heard a faint noise, and then again a blow.

He struck her mother, the terrible brutal Melchior Sinclair struck his wife!

And in pale horror Marianne threw herself down on the threshold and writhed in anguish. Now she wept, and her tears froze to ice on the threshold of her home.

Grace! pity! Open, open, that she might bend her own back under the blows! Oh, that he could strike her mother, strike her, because she did not wish to see her daughter the next day lying dead in the snow-drift, because she had wished to comfort her child!

Great humiliation had come to Marianne that night. She had fancied herself a queen, and she lay there little better than a whipped slave.

But she rose up in cold rage. Once more she struck the door with her bloody hand and called:

"Hear what I say to you,—you, who beat my mother. You shall weep for this, Melchior Sinclair, weep!"

Then she went and laid herself to rest in the snow-drift. She threw off her cloak and lay in her black velvet dress, easily distinguishable against the white snow. She lay and thought how her father would come out the next day on his early morning tour of inspection and find her there. She only hoped that he himself might find her.

O Death, pale friend, is it as true as it is consoling, that I never can escape meeting you? Even to me, the lowliest of earth's workers, will you come, to loosen the torn leather shoes from my feet, to take the spade and the barrow from my hand, to take the working-dress from my body. With gentle force you lay me out on a lace-trimmed bed; you adorn me with draped linen sheets. My feet need no more shoes, my hands are clad in snow-white gloves, which no more work shall soil. Consecrated by thee to the sweetness of rest, I shall sleep a sleep of a thousand years. Oh, deliverer! The lowliest of earth's laborers am I, and I dream with a thrill of pleasure of the hour when I shall be received into your kingdom.

Pale friend, on me you can easily try your strength, but I tell you that the fight was harder

against those women of the olden days. Life's strength was mighty in their slender bodies, no cold could cool their hot blood. You had laid Marianne on your bed, O Death, and you sat by her side, as an old nurse sits by the cradle to lull the child to sleep. You faithful old nurse, who know what is good for the children of men, how angry you must be when playmates come, who with noise and romping wake your sleeping child. How vexed you must have been when the pensioners lifted the lovely Marianne out of the bed, when a man laid her against his breast, and warm tears fell from his eyes on to her face.

At Ekeby all lights were out, and all the guests had gone. The pensioners stood alone in the bachelors' wing, about the last half-emptied punch bowl.

Then Gösta rung on the edge of the bowl and made a speech for you, women of the olden days. To speak of you, he said, was to speak of the kingdom of heaven: you were all beauties, ever bright, ever young, ever lovely and gentle as a mother's eyes when she looks down on her child. Soft as young squirrels you hung on your husband's neck, your voice never trembled with anger, no frowns ruffled your brow, your white hands were never harsh and hard. Sweet saints, you were adored images in the temple of home. Men lay at your feet, offering you incense and prayers. Through you love worked its wonders, and round your

temples poetry wreathed its gold, gleaming glory.

And the pensioners sprang up, wild with wine, wild with his words, with their blood raging. Old Eberhard and the lazy Christopher drew back from the sport. In the wildest haste the pensioners harnessed horses to sledges and hurried out in the cold night to pay homage to those who never could be honored enough, to sing a serenade to each and all of them who possessed the rosy cheeks and bright eyes which had just lighted up Ekeby halls.

But the pensioners did not go far on their happy way, for when they came to Björne, they found Marianne lying in the snow-drift, just by the door of her home.

They trembled and raged to see here there. It was like finding a worshipped saint lying mangled and stripped outside the church-door.

Gösta shook his clenched hand at the dark house. "You children of hate," he cried, "you hail-storms, you ravagers of God's pleasure-house!"

Beerencreutz lighted his horn lantern and let it shine down on the livid face. Then the pensioners saw Marianne's mangled hands, and the tears which had frozen to ice on her eyelashes, and they wailed like women, for she was not merely a saintly image, but a beautiful woman, who had been a joy to their old hearts.

Gösta Berling threw himself on his knees beside her.

"She is lying here, my bride," he said. "She gave me the betrothal kiss a few hours ago, and her

father has promised me his blessing. She lies and waits for me to come and share her white bed."

And Gösta lifted up the lifeless form in his strong arms.

"Home to Ekeby with her!" he cried. "Now she is mine. In the snow-drift I have found her; no one shall take her from me. We will not wake them in there. What has she to do behind those doors, against which she has beaten her hand into blood?"

He was allowed to do as he wished. He laid Marianne in the foremost sledge and sat down at her side. Beerencreutz sat behind and took the reins.

"Take snow and rub her, Gösta!" he commanded.

The cold had paralyzed her limbs, nothing more. The wildly agitated heart still beat. She had not even lost consciousness; she knew all about the pensioners, and how they had found her, but she could not move. So she lay stiff and stark in the sledge, while Gösta Berling rubbed her with snow and alternately wept and kissed, and she felt an infinite longing to be able only to lift a hand, that she might give a caress in return.

She remembered everything. She lay there stiff and motionless and thought more clearly than ever before. Was she in love with Gösta Berling? Yes, she was. Was it merely a whim of the moment? No, it had been for many years. She compared herself with him and the other people in Värmland. They were all just like children. They followed

whatever impulse came to them. They only lived the outer life, had never looked deep into their souls. But she had become what one grows to be by living in the world; she could never really lose herself in anything. If she loved, yes, whatever she did, one half of her stood and looked on with a cold scorn. She had longed for a passion which should carry her away in wild heedlessness, and now it had come. When she kissed Gösta Berling on the balcony, for the first time she had forgotten herself.

And now the passion came over her again, her heart throbbed so that she heard it beat. Should she not soon be mistress of her limbs? She felt a wild joy that she had been thrust out from her home. Now she could be Gösta's without hesitation. How stupid she had been, to have subdued her love so many years. Ah, it is so sweet to yield to love. But shall she never, never be free from these icy chains? She had been ice within and fire on the surface; now it is the opposite, a soul of fire in a body of ice.

Then Gösta feels how two arms gently are raised about his neck in a weak, feeble pressure.

He could only just feel them, but Marianne thought that she gave expression to the suppressed passion in her by a suffocating embrace.

But when Beerencreutz saw it he let the horse go as it would along the familiar road. He raised his eyes and looked obstinately and unceasingly at the Pleiades.

SELMA LAGERLÖF.

NOVEMBER 21

THE PAINS OF OPIUM

MY STUDIES have now been long interrupted. I cannot read to myself with any pleasure, hardly with a moment's endurance. Yet I sometimes read aloud for the pleasure of others; because reading is an accomplishment of mine, and, in the slang use of the word *accomplishment* as a superficial and ornamental attainment, almost the only one I possess; and formerly, if I had any vanity at all connected with any endowment or attainment of mine, it was with this; for I had observed that no accomplishment is more rare. Actors are the worst readers of all. John Kemble is not effective as a reader, though he has the great advantage of mature scholarship; and his sister, the immortal Siddons, with all her superiority to him in voice, reads even less effectively. She reads nothing well but dramatic works. In the "Paradise Lost," which I heard her attempt at Barley Wood, her failure was distressing; almost as distressing as the sycophantic applause of the surrounding company—all lost, of course, in nearly speechless admiration. (Yet I am sensible that this contemptuous feeling for the circle of

admirers is scarcely justified. What *should* the poor creatures have done? Already, in the mere attempt to win their suffrages, in placing herself once again upon trial, there was a condescension on the part of Mrs. Siddons, after which free judgment became impossible. I felt a wish to address Mrs. Siddons thus—You that have read to royalty at Windsor, nay, have even been desired to *sit down* at Windsor whilst reading, ever afterwards are a privileged person, liable to no accent of truth. Our feelings, as not free to take any natural expression, can be of no value. Suffer us to be silent, if only for the dignity of human nature. And do you yourself be silent, if only for the dignity of that once unequalled voice.) Neither Coleridge nor Southey is a good reader of verse. Southey is admirable almost in all things, but not in this. Both he and Coleridge read as if crying, or at least wailing lugubriously. People in general either read poetry without any passion at all or else overstep the modesty of nature. Of late, if I have felt moved by anything in books, it has been by the grand lamentations of "Samson Agonistes," or the great harmonies of the Satanic speeches in "Paradise Regained," when read aloud by myself. We are far from towns; but a young lady sometimes comes and drinks tea with us; at her request and M——'s, I now and then read Wordworth's poems to them. (Wordsworth, by the bye, is the only poet I ever met who could read his own verses; often, indeed, he reads admirably.)

For nearly two years I believe that I read

nothing and studied nothing. Analytic studies are continuous studies, and not to be pursued by fits and starts, or fragmentary efforts. All these were become insupportable to me; I shrank from them with a sense of powerless and infantine feebleness that gave me an anguish the greater from remembering the time when I grappled with them to my own hourly delight; and for this further reason, because I had devoted the labour of my whole life, had dedicated my intellect, blossoms and fruits, to the slow and elaborate toil of constructing one single work, to which I had presumed to give the title of an unfinished work of Spinosa's—viz., "*De Emendatione Humani Intellectûs.*" This was now lying locked up as by frost, like any Spanish bridge or aqueduct begun upon too great a scale for the resources of the architect; and, instead of surviving me, as a monument of wishes at least, and aspirations, and long labours, dedicated to the exaltation of human nature in that way in which God had best fitted me to promote so great an object, it was likely to stand a memorial to my children of hopes defeated, of baffled efforts, of materials uselessly accumulated, of foundations laid that were never to support a superstructure, of the grief and the ruin of the architect. In this state of imbecility, I had, for amusement, turned my attention to political economy. My understanding, which formerly had been as active and restless as a panther, could not, I suppose (so long as I lived at all), sink into utter lethargy; and political economy offers this

advantage to a person in my state,—that, though it is eminently an organic science (no part, that is to say, but what acts on the whole, as the whole again reacts on and on through each part), yet still the several parts may be detached and contemplated singly. Great as was the prostration of my powers at this time, yet I could not forget my knowledge; and my understanding had been for too many years intimate with severe thinkers, with logic, and the great masters of knowledge, not to be aware of a great call made by political economy at this crisis for a new law and a transcendent legislator. Suddenly, in 1818, a friend in Edinburgh sent me down Mr. Ricardo's book; and, recurring to my own prophetic anticipation of some coming legislator for this science, I said, before I had finished the first chapter, "Thou art the man!" Wonder and curiosity were emotions that had long been dead in me. Yet I wondered once more—wondered at myself that could once again be stimulated to the effort of reading; and much more I wondered at the book. Had this profound work been really written during the tumultuous hurry of the nineteenth century?

Could it be that an Englishman, and he not in academic bowers, but oppressed by mercantile and senatorial cares, had accomplished what all the universities of Europe and a century of thought had failed even to advance by one hair's breadth? Previous writers had been crushed and overlaid by the enormous weights of facts, details, and exceptions; Mr. Ricardo had deduced, *a priori*, from

the understanding itself, laws which first shot arrowy light into the dark chaos of materials, and had thus constructed what hitherto was but a collection of tentative discussions into a science of regular proportions, now first standing upon an eternal basis.

Thus did one simple work of a profound understanding avail to give me a pleasure and an activity which I had not known for years; it roused me even to write, or, at least, to dictate what M—— wrote for me. It seemed to me that some important truths had escaped even "the inevitable eye" of Mr. Ricardo; and, as these were, for the most part, of such a nature that I could express or illustrate them briefly and elegantly by algebraic symbols, the whole would hardly have reached the bulk of a pamphlet. With M—— for my amanuensis, even at this time, incapable as I was of all general exertion, I drew up, therefore, my "Prolegomena to all Future Systems of Political Economy."

This exertion, however, was but a momentary flash, as the sequel showed. Arrangements were made at a provincial press, about eighteen miles distant, for printing it. An additional compositor was retained for some days on this account. The work was even twice advertised; and I was, in a manner, pledged to the fulfilment of my intention. But I had a preface to write, and a dedication, which I wished to make impressive, to Mr. Ricardo. I found myself quite unable to accomplish all this. The arrangements were

countermanded, the compositor dismissed, and my "Prolegomena" rested peacefully by the side of its elder and more dignified brother.

In thus describing and illustrating my intellectual torpor, I use terms that apply, more or less, to every part of the years during which I was under the Circean spells of opium. But for misery and suffering, I might, indeed, be said to have existed in a dormant state. I seldom could prevail on myself to write a letter; an answer of a few words to any that I received was the utmost that I could accomplish; and often *that* not until the letter had lain for weeks, or even months, on my writing-table. Without the aid of M——, my whole domestic economy, whatever became of political economy, must have gone into irretrievable confusion. I shall not afterwards allude to this part of the case; it is one, however, which the opium-eater will find, in the end, most oppressive and tormenting, from the sense and incapacity and feebleness, from the direct embarrassments incident to the neglect or procrastination of each day's appropriate labours, and from the remorse which must often exasperate the strings of these evils to a conscientious mind. The opium-eater loses none of his moral sensibilities or aspirations; he wishes and longs as earnestly as ever to realise what he believes possible, and feels to be exacted by duty; but his intellectual apprehension of what is possible infinitely outruns his power, not of execution only, but even of proposing or willing. He lies under a world's weight

of incubus and nightmares; he lies in sight of all that he would fain perform, just as a man forcibly confined to his bed by the mortal languor of paralysis, who is compelled to witness injury or outrage offered to some object of his tenderest love:—he would lay down his life if he might but rise and walk; but he is powerless as an infant, and cannot so much as make an effort to move.

But from this I now pass to what is the main subject of these latter Confessions—to the history and journal of what took place in my dreams; for these were the immediate and proximate cause of shadowy terrors that settled and brooded over my whole waking life.

The first notice I had of any important change going on in this part of my physical economy was from the re-awakening of a state of eye oftentimes incident to childhood. I know not whether my reader is aware that many children have a power of painting, as it were, upon the darkness all sorts of phantoms: in some that power is simply a mechanic affection of the eye; others have a voluntary or semi-voluntary power to dismiss or summon such phantoms; or, as a child once said to me, when I questioned him on this matter, "I can tell them to go, and they go; but sometimes they come when I don't tell them to come." He had by one-half as unlimited a command over apparitions as a Roman centurion over his soldiers. In the middle of 1817 this faculty became increasingly distressing to me: at night, when I lay awake in bed, vast processions moved along continually

in mournful pomp; friezes of never-ending stories. that to my feelings were as sad and solemn as stories drawn from times before Œdipus or Priam, before Tyre, before Memphis. And, concurrently with this, a corresponding change took place in my dreams; a theatre seemed suddenly opened and lighted up within my brain, which presented nightly spectacles of more than earthly splendour. And the four following facts may be mentioned, as noticeable at this time:—

1. That, as the creative state of the eye increased, a sympathy seemed to arise between the waking and the dreaming states of the brain in one point—that whatsoever I happened to call up and to trace by a voluntary act upon the darkness was very apt to transfer itself to my dreams; and at length I feared to exercise this faculty; for, as Midas turned all things to gold that yet baffled his hopes and defrauded his human desires, so whatsoever things capable of being visually represented I did but think of in the darkness immediately shaped themselves into phantoms for the eye; and, by a process apparently no less inevitable, when thus once traced in faint and visionary colours, like writings in sympathetic ink, they were drawn out, by the fierce chemistry of my dreams, into insufferable splendour that fretted my heart.

2. This and all other changes in my dreams were accompanied by deep-seated anxiety and funereal melancholy, such as are wholly incommunicable by words. I seemed every night to

descend—not metaphorically, but literally to descend—into chasms and sunless abysses, depths below depths, from which it seemed hopeless that I could ever re-ascend. Nor did I, by waking, feel that I *had* re-ascended. Why should I dwell upon this? For indeed the state of gloom which attended these gorgeous spectacles, amounting at last to utter darkness, as of some suicidal despondency, cannot be approached by words.

3. The sense of space, and in the end the sense of time, were both powerfully affected. Buildings, landscape, etc., were exhibited in proportions so vast as the bodily eye is not fitted to receive. Space swelled, and was amplified to an extent of unutterable and self-repeating infinity. This disturbed me very much less than the vast expansion of time. Sometimes I seemed to have lived for seventy or a hundred years in one night; nay, sometimes had feelings representative of a duration far beyond the limits of any human experience.

4. The minutest incidents of childhood, or forgotten scenes of later years, were often revived. I could not be said to recollect them; for, if I had been told of them when waking, I should not have been able to acknowledge them as parts of my past experience. But, placed as they were before me in dreams like intuitions, and clothed in all their evanescent circumstances and accompanying feelings, I *recognised* them instantaneously. I was once told by a near relative of mine that, having in her childhood fallen into a river, and

being on the very verge of death but for the assistance which reached her at the last critical moment, she saw in a moment her whole life, clothed in its forgotten incidents, arrayed before her as in a mirror, not successively, but simultaneously; and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part. This, from some opium experiences, I can believe; I have, indeed, seen the same thing asserted twice in modern books, and accompanied by a remark which probably is true—viz., that the dread book of account which the Scriptures speak of is, in fact, the mind itself of each individual. Of this, at least, I feel assured, that there is no such thing as ultimate *forgetting;* traces once impressed upon the memory are indestructible; a thousand accidents may and will interpose a veil between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the mind. Accidents of the same sort will also rend away this veil. But alike, whether veiled or unveiled, the inscription remains forever; just as the stars seem to withdraw before the common light of day, whereas, in fact, we all know that it is the light which is drawn over them as a veil, and that they are waiting to be revealed whenever the obscuring daylight itself shall have withdrawn.

Having noticed these four facts as memorably distinguishing my dreams from those of health, I shall now cite a few illustrative cases; and shall then cite such others as I remember in any order that may give them most effect as pictures to the reader.

I had been in youth, and ever since, for occasional amusement, a great reader of Livy, whom I confess that I prefer, both for style and matter, to any other of the Roman historians; and I had often felt as solemn and appalling sounds, emphatically representative of Roman majesty, the two words so often occurring in Livy, *Consul Romanus;* especially when the consul is introduced in his military character. I mean to say that the words *king, sultan, regent,* etc., or any other titles of those who embody in their own persons the collective majesty of a great people, had less power over my reverential feelings. I had also, though no great reader of History, made myself critically familiar with one period of English history—viz., the period of the Parliamentary War—having been attracted by the moral grandeur of some who figured in that day, and by the interesting memoirs which survive those unquiet times. Both these parts of my lighter reading, having furnished me often with matter of reflection, now furnished me with matter for my dreams. Often I used to see, after painting upon the blank darkness a sort of rehearsal whilst waking, a crowd of ladies, and perhaps a festival and dances. And I heard it said, or I said to myself, "These are English ladies from the unhappy times of Charles I. These are the wives and daughters of those who met in peace, and sat at the same tables, and were allied by marriage or by blood; and yet, after a certain day in August, 1642, never smiled upon each other again, nor met but in the field of

battle; and at Marston Moor, at Newbury, or at Naseby, cut asunder all ties of love by the cruel sabre, and washed away in blood the memory of ancient friendship." The ladies danced, and looked as lovely as at the court of George IV. Yet even in my dream I knew that they had been in the grave for nearly two centuries. This pageant would suddenly dissolve; and, at a clapping of hands, would be heard the heart-shaking sound of *Consul Romanus;* and immediately came "sweeping by," in gorgeous paludaments, Paullus or Marius, girt around by a company of centurions, with the crimson tunic hoisted on a spear, and followed by the *alalagimos* of the Roman legions.

Many years ago, when I was looking over Piranesi's "Antiquities of Rome," Coleridge, then standing by, described to me a set of plates from that artist, called his "Dreams," and which record the scenery of his own visions during the delirium of a fever. Some of these (I describe only from memory of Coleridge's account) represented vast Gothic halls; on the floor of which stood mighty engines and machinery, wheels, cables, catapults, etc., expressive of enormous power put forth, or resistance overcome. Creeping along the sides of the walls, you perceive a staircase; and upon this, groping his way upwards, was Piranesi himself. Follow the stairs a little farther, and you perceive them reaching an abrupt termination, without any balustrade, and allowing no step onwards to him who should reach the extremity, except into the depths below. Whatever is to

become of poor Piranesi, at least you suppose that his labours must now in some way terminate. But raise your eyes, and behold a second flight of stairs still higher, on which again Piranesi is perceived, by this time standing on the very brink of the abyss. Once again elevate your eye, and a still more aerial flight of stairs is descried; and there, again, is the delirious Piranesi, busy on his aspiring labours: and so on, until the unfinished stairs and the hopeless Piranesi both are lost in the upper gloom of the hall. With the same power of endless growth and self-reproduction did my architecture proceed in dreams. In the early stage of the malady, the splendours of my dreams were indeed chiefly architectural; and I beheld such pomp of cities and palaces as never yet was beheld by the waking eye, unless in the clouds. From a great modern poet I cite the part of a passage which describes, as an appearance actually beheld in the clouds, what in many of its circumstances I saw frequently in sleep:—

"The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth,
Far sinking into splendour without end!
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,
With alabaster domes and silver spires,
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,
In avenues disposed; there, towers begirt
With battlements that on their restless fronts
Bore stars—illumination of all gems!

By earthly nature had the effect been wrought!
Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified; on them, and on the coves,
And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto
The vapours had receded, taking there
Their station under a cerulean sky."

The sublime circumstance—"that on their *restless* fronts bore stars"—might have been copied from my own architectural dreams, so often did it occur. We hear it reported of Dryden, and in later times of Fuseli, that they ate raw meat for the sake of obtaining splendid dreams; how much better, for such a purpose, to have eaten opium, which yet I do not remember that any poet is recorded to have done, except the dramatist Shadwell; and in ancient days, Homer is, I think, rightly reputed to have known the virtues of opium as a φάρμακον νηπενθές—*i. e.*, as an anodyne.

To my architecture succeeded dreams of lakes and silvery expanses of water: these haunted me so much that I feared lest some dropsical state or tendency of the brain might thus be making itself (to use a metaphysical word) *objective*, and that the sentient organ might be projecting itself as its own object. For two months I suffered greatly in my head—a part of my bodily structure which had hitherto been so clear from all touch or taint of weakness (physically, I mean) that I used to say of it, as the last Lord Orford said of his stomach, that it seemed likely to survive the rest of my person. Till now I had never felt a headache

even, or any the slightest pain, except rheumatic pains caused by my own folly.

The waters gradually changed their character—from translucent lakes, shining like mirrors, they became seas and oceans. And now came a tremendous change, which, unfolding itself slowly like a scroll, through many months, promised an abiding torment; and, in fact, it never left me, though recurring more or less intermittingly. Hitherto the human face had often mixed in my dreams, but not despotically, nor with any special power of tormenting. But now that affection which I have called the tyranny of the human face began to unfold itself. Perhaps some part of my London life (the searching for Ann amongst fluctuating crowds) might be answerable for this. Be that as it may, now it was that upon the rocking waters of the ocean the human face began to reveal itself; the sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens; faces, imploring, wrathful, despairing; faces that surged upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations: infinite was my agitation; my mind tossed, as it seemed, upon the billowy ocean, and weltered upon the weltering waves.

May, 1818.—The Malay has been a fearful enemy for months. Every night, through his means, I have been transported into Asiatic scenery. I know not whether others share in my feelings on this point; but I have often thought that, if I were compelled to forgo England, and to live in China, among Chinese manners and

modes of life and scenery, I should go mad. The causes of my horror lie deep, and some of them must be common to others. Southern Asia, in general, is the seat of awful images and associations. As the cradle of the human race, if on no other ground, it would have a dim, reverential feeling connected with it. But there are other reasons. No man can pretend that the wild, barbarous, and capricious superstitions of Africa, or of savage tribes elsewhere, affect him in the way that he is affected by the ancient, monumental, cruel, and elaborate religions of Hindostan. The mere antiquity of Asiatic things, of their institutions, histories,—above all, of their mythologies, etc.,—is so impressive that to me the vast age of the race and name overpowers the sense of youth in the individual. A young Chinese seems to me an antediluvian man renewed. Even Englishmen, though not bred in any knowledge of such institutions, cannot but shudder at the mystic sublimity of *castes* that have flowed apart, and refused to mix, through such immemorial tracts of time; nor can any man fail to be awed by the sanctity of the Ganges, or by the very name of the Euphrates. It contributes much to these feelings that South-eastern Asia is, and has been for thousands of years, the part of the earth most swarming with human life, the great *officina gentium.* Man is a weed in those regions. The vast empires, also, into which the enormous population of Asia has always been cast, give a further sublimity to the feelings associated with all oriental

names or images. In China, over and above what it has in common with the rest of Southern Asia, I am terrified by the modes of life, by the manners, by the barrier of utter abhorrence placed between myself and *them* by counter-sympathies deeper than I can analyse. I could sooner live with lunatics, with vermin, with crocodiles or snakes. All this, and much more than I can say, the reader must enter into before he can comprehend the unimaginable horror which these dreams of oriental imagery and mythological tortures impressed upon me. Under the connecting feeling of tropical heat and vertical sunlights, I brought together all creatures, birds, beasts, reptiles, all trees and plants, usages and appearances, that are found in all tropical regions, and assembled them together in China or Hindostan. From kindred feelings, I soon brought Egypt and her gods under the same law. I was stared at, hooted at, grinned at, chatted at, by monkeys, by paraquets, by cockatoos. I ran into pagodas, and was fixed for centuries at the summit, or in secret rooms; I was the idol; I was the priest; I was worshipped; I was sacrificed. I fled from the wrath of Brama through all the forests of Asia; Vishnu hated me; Seeva lay in wait for me. I came suddenly upon Isis and Osiris: I had done a deed, they said, which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at. Thousands of years I lived and was buried in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. I was kissed, with cancerous kisses, by

crocodiles and was laid, confounded with all unutterable abortions, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud.

Some slight abstraction I thus attempt of my oriental dreams, which filled me always with such amazement at the monstrous scenery that horror seemed absorbed for a while in sheer astonishment. Sooner or later came a reflux of feeling that swallowed up the astonishment, and left me, not so much in terror, as in hatred and abomination of what I saw. Over every form, and threat, and punishment, and dim sightless incarceration, brooded a killing sense of eternity and infinity. Into these dreams only it was, with one or two slight exceptions, that any circumstances of physical horror entered. All before had been moral and spiritual terrors. But here the main agents were ugly birds, or snakes, or crocodiles, especially the last. The cursed crocodile became to me the object of more horror than all the rest. I was compelled to live with him; and (as was always the case in my dreams) for centuries. Sometimes I escaped, and found myself in Chinese houses. All the feet of the tables, sofas, etc., soon became instinct with life: the abominable head of the crocodile, and his leering eyes, looked out at me, multiplied into ten thousand repetitions: and I stood loathing and fascinated. So often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams that many times the very same dream was broken up in the very same way: I heard gentle voices speaking to me (I hear everything

when I am sleeping), and instantly I awoke; it was broad noon, and my children were standing, hand in hand, at my bedside, come to show me their coloured shoes, or new frocks, or to let me see them dressed for going out. No experience was so awful to me, and at the same time so pathetic, as this abrupt translation from the darkness of the infinite to the gaudy summer air of highest noon, and from the unutterable abortions of miscreated gigantic vermin to the sight of infancy and innocent *human* natures.

June, 1819.—I have had occasion to remark, at various periods of my life, that the deaths of those whom we love, and, indeed, the contemplation of death generally is (*cæteris paribus*) more affecting in summer than in any other season of the year. And the reasons are these three, I think: first, that the visible heavens in summer appear far higher, more distant, and (if such a solecism may be excused) more infinite; the clouds by which chiefly the eye expounds the distance of the blue pavilion stretched over our heads are in summer more voluminous, more massed, and are accumulated in far grander and more towering piles; secondly, the light and the appearances of the declining and the setting sun are much more fitted to be types and characters of the infinite; and, thirdly (which is the main reason), the exuberant and riotous prodigality of life naturally forces the mind more powerfully upon the antagonist thought of death, and the wintry sterility of the grave. For it may be observed generally

that, whenever two thoughts stand related to each other by a law of antagonism, and exist, as it were, by mutual repulsion, they are apt to suggest each other. On these accounts it is that I find it impossible to banish the thought of death when I am walking alone in the endless days of summer; and any particular death, if not actually more affecting, at least haunts my mind more obstinately and besiegingly, in that season. Perhaps this cause, and a slight incident which I omit, might have been the immediate occasions of the following dream, to which, however, a predisposition must always have existed in my mind; but, having been once roused, it never left me, and split into a thousand fantastic variations, which often suddenly re-combined, locked back into startling unity and restored the original dream.

I thought that it was a Sunday morning in May; that it was Easter Sunday, and as yet very early in the morning. I was standing, as it seemed to me, at the door of my own cottage. Right before me lay the very scene which could really be commanded from that situation, but exalted, as was usual, and solemnised by the power of dream. There were the same mountains and the same lovely valley at their feet; but the mountains were raised to more than Alpine height, and there was interspace far larger between them of savannahs and forest lawns; the hedges were rich with white roses; and no living creature was to be seen, excepting that in the green churchyard there were cattle tranquilly reposing upon the verdant graves,

and particularly round about the grave of a child whom I had once tenderly loved, just as I had really beheld them, a little before sunrise, in the same summer when that child died. I gazed upon the well-known scene, and I said to myself, "It yet wants much of sunrise; and it is Easter Sunday; and that is the day on which they celebrate the first-fruits of Resurrection. I will walk abroad; old griefs shall be forgotten to-day: for the air is cool and still, and the hills are high, and stretch away to heaven; and the churchyard is as verdant as the forest lawns, and the forest lawns are as quiet as the churchyard; and with the dew I can wash the fever from my forehead; and then I shall be unhappy no longer." I turned, as if to open a garden gate, and immediately I saw upon the left a scene far different; but which yet the power of dreams had reconciled into harmony. The scene was an oriental one; and there also it was Easter Sunday, and very early in the morning. And at a vast distance were visible, as a stain upon the horizon, the domes and cupolas of a great city —an image or faint abstraction, caught perhaps in childhood from some picture of Jerusalem. And not a bow-shot from me, upon a stone, shaded by Judean palms, there sat a woman; and I looked, and it was—Ann! She fixed her eyes upon me earnestly; and I said to her at length, "So, then, I have found you at last." I waited; but she answered me not a word. Her face was the same as when I saw it last; the same, and yet, again, how different! Seventeen years ago, when the

lamp-light of mighty London fell upon her face, as for the last time I kissed her lips (lips, Ann, that to me were not polluted!), her eyes were streaming with tears. The tears were now no longer seen. Sometimes she seemed altered; yet again sometimes *not* altered; and hardly older. Her looks were tranquil, but with unusual solemnity of expression, and I now gazed upon her with some awe. Suddenly her countenance grew dim; and, turning to the mountains, I perceived vapours rolling between us; in a moment all had vanished; thick darkness came on; and in the twinkling of an eye I was far away from mountains, and by lamp-light in London, walking again with Ann—just as we had walked, when both children, eighteen years before, along the endless terraces of Oxford Street.

Then suddenly would come a dream of far different character—a tumultuous dream—commencing with a music such as now I often heard in sleep—music of preparation and of awakening suspense. The undulations of fast-gathering tumults were like the opening of the Coronation Anthem; and, like *that*, gave the feeling of a multitudinous movement, of infinite cavalcades filing off; and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day—a day of crisis and ultimate hope for human nature, then suffering mysterious eclipse, and labouring in some dread extremity. Somewhere, but I knew not where—somehow, but I knew not how—by some beings but I knew not by whom—a battle, a strife,

an agony, was travelling through all its stages—was evolving itself, like the catastrophe of some mighty drama, with which my sympathy was the more insupportable from deepening confusion as to its local scene, its cause, its nature, and its undecipherable issue. I (as is usual in dreams where, of necessity, we make ourselves central to every movement) had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I had the power, if I could raise myself to will it; and yet again had not the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpiable guilt. "Deeper than ever plummet sounded," I lay inactive. Then, like a chorus, the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake, some mightier cause, than ever yet the sword had pleaded, or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms; hurryings to and fro; trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights; tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me; and but a moment allowed—and clasped hands, with heart-breaking partings, and then—everlasting farewells! and, with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of Death, the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells!

And I awoke in struggles, and cried aloud, "I will sleep no more!"

Now, at last, I had become awestruck at the approach of sleep, under the condition of visions so afflicting, and so intensely life-like as those which persecuted my phantom-haunted brain. More and more also I felt violent palpitations in some internal region, such as are commonly, but erroneously, called palpitations of the heart—being, as I suppose, referable exclusively to derangements in the stomach. These were evidently increasing rapidly in frequency and in strength. Naturally, therefore, on considering how important my life had become to others besides myself, I became alarmed; and I paused seasonably; but with a difficulty that is past all description. Either way it seemed as though death had, in military language, "thrown himself astride of my path." Nothing short of mortal anguish, in a physical sense, it seemed, to wean myself from opium; yet, on the other hand, death through overwhelming nervous terrors—death by brain-fever or by lunacy—seemed too certainly to besiege the alternate course. Fortunately I had still so much of firmness left as to face that choice, which, with most of instant suffering, showed in the far distance a possibility of final escape.

This possibility was realised: I *did* accomplish my escape. And the issue of that particular stage in my opium experiences (for such it was—simply a provisional stage, that paved the way subsequently for many milder stages, to which gradually my constitutional system accommodated itself)

was, pretty nearly in the following words, communicated to my readers in the earliest edition of these Confessions:—

I triumphed. But infer not, reader, from this word "*triumphed*," a condition of joy or exultation. Think of me as one, even when four months had passed, still agitated, writhing, throbbing, palpitating, shattered; and much, perhaps, in the situation of him who has been racked, as I collect the torments of that state from the affecting account of them left by a most innocent sufferer in the time of James I. Meantime, I derived no benefit from any medicine whatever, except ammoniated tincture of valerian. The moral of the narrative is addressed to the opium-eater; and therefore, of necessity, limited in its application. If he is taught to fear and tremble, enough has been effected. But he may say that the issue of my case is at least a proof that opium, after an eighteen years' use, and an eight years' abuse of its powers, may still be renounced; and that he may chance to bring to the task greater energy than I did, or that, with a stronger constitution, he may obtain the same results with less. This may be true; I would not presume to measure the effort of other men by my own. Heartily I wish him more resolution; heartily I wish him an equal success. Nevertheless, I had motives external to myself which he may unfortunately want; and these supplied me with conscientious supports, such as merely selfish interests might fail in supplying to a mind debilitated by opium.

Lord Bacon conjectures that it may be as painful to be born as to die. That seems probable; and, during the whole period of diminishing the opium, I had the torments of a man passing out of one mode of existence into another, and liable to the mixed or the alternate pains of birth and death. The issue was not death, but a sort of physical regeneration; and I may add that ever since, at intervals, I have had a restoration of more than youthful spirits.

One memorial of my former condition nevertheless remains: my dreams are not calm; the dread swell and agitation of the storm have not wholly subsided; the legions that encamped in them are drawing off, but not departed; my sleep is still tumultuous; and, like the gates of Paradise to our first parents, when looking back from afar, it is still (in the tremendous line of Milton)—

"With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms."

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

NOVEMBER 22

A GOBOTO NIGHT

I

AT GOBOTO the traders come off their schooners and the planters drift in from far, wild coasts, and one and all they assume shoes, white duck trousers, and various other appearances of civilization. At Goboto mail is received, bills are paid, and newspapers, rarely more than five weeks old, are accessible; for the little island, belted with its coral reefs, affords safe anchorage, is the steamer port of call, and serves as the distributing point for the whole wide-scattered group.

Life at Goboto is heated, unhealthy, and lurid, and for its size it asserts the distinction of more cases of acute alcoholism than any other spot in the world. Guvutu, over in the Solomons, claims that it drinks between drinks. Goboto does not deny this. It merely states, in passing, that in the Goboton chronology no such interval of time is known. It also points out its import statistics, which show a far larger per capita consumption of spirituous liquors. Guvutu explains this on the basis that Goboto does a larger business and has more visitors. Goboto retorts that its resident population is smaller and that its visitors are

thirstier. And the discussion goes on interminably, principally because of the fact that the disputants do not live long enough to settle it.

Goboto is not large. The island is only a quarter of a mile in diameter, and on it are situated an admiralty coal-shed (where a few tons of coal have lain untouched for twenty years), the barracks for a handful of black laborers, a big store and warehouse with sheet-iron roofs, and a bungalow inhabited by the manager and his two clerks. They are the white population. An average of one man out of the three is always to be found down with fever. The job at Goboto is a hard one. It is the policy of the company to treat its patrons well, as invading companies have found out, and it is the task of the manager and clerks to do the treating. Throughout the year traders and recruiters arrive from far, dry cruises, and planters from equally distant and dry shores, bringing with them magnificent thirsts. Goboto is the Mecca of sprees, and when they have spread they go back to their schooners and plantations to recuperate.

Some of the less hardy require as much as six months between visits. But for the manager and his assistants there are no such intervals. They are on the spot, and week by week, blown in by monsoon or southeast trade, the schooners come to anchor, cargoed with copra, ivory nuts, pearl-shell, hawksbill turtle, and thirst.

It is a very hard job at Goboto. That is why the pay is twice that on other stations, and that is why the company selects only courageous and

intrepid men for this particular station. They last no more than a year or so, when the wreckage of them is shipped back to Australia, or the remains of them are buried in the sand across on the windward side of the islet. Johnny Bassett, almost the legendary hero of Goboto, broke all records. He was a remittance man with a remarkable constitution, and he lasted seven years. His dying request was duly observed by his clerks, who pickled him in a cask of trade-rum (paid for out of their own salaries) and shipped him back to his people in England.

Nevertheless, at Goboto, they tried to be gentlemen. For that matter, though something was wrong with them, they were gentlemen and had been gentlemen. That was why the great unwritten rule of Goboto was that visitors should put on pants and shoes. Breech-clouts, lava-lavas, and bare legs were not tolerated. When Captain Jensen, the wildest of the Blackbirders though descended from old New York Knickerbocker stock, surged in, clad in loin-cloth, undershirt, two belted revolvers and a sheath-knife, he was stopped at the beach. This was in the days of Johnny Bassett, ever a stickler in matters of etiquette. Captain Jensen stood up in the sternsheets of his whaleboat and denied the existence of pants on his schooner. Also, he affirmed his intention of coming ashore. They of Goboto nursed him back to health from a bullet-hole through his shoulder, and in addition handsomely begged his pardon, for no pants had they found on his schooner.

And finally, on the first day he sat up, Johnny Bassett kindly but firmly assisted his guest into a pair of pants of his own. This was the great precedent. In all the succeeding years it had never been violated. White men and pants were undivorceable. Only niggers ran naked. Pants constituted caste.

II

On this night things were, with one exception in nowise different from any other night. Seven of them, with glimmering eyes and steady legs, had capped a day of Scotch with swivel-sticked cocktails and sat down to dinner. Jacketed, trousered, and shod, they were: Jerry McMurtrey, the manager; Eddy Little and Jack Andrews, clerks; Captain Stapler, of the recruiting ketch *Merry;* Darby Shryleton, planter from Tito-Ito; Peter Gee, a half-caste Chinese pearl-buyer who ranged from Ceylon to the Paumotus, and Alfred Deacon, a visitor who had stopped off from the last steamer. At first wine was served by the black servants to those that drank it, though all quickly shifted back to Scotch and soda, pickling their food as they ate it, ere it went into their calcined, pickled stomachs.

Over their coffee, they heard the rumble of an anchor-chain through a hawse-pipe, tokening the arrival of a vessel.

"It's David Grief," Peter Gee remarked.

"How do you know?" Deacon demanded truculently, and then went on to deny the half-caste's

knowledge. "You chaps put on a lot of side over a new chum. I've done some sailing myself, and this naming a craft when its sail is only a blur, or naming a man by the sound of his anchor—it's —it's unadulterated poppycock."

Peter Gee was engaged in lighting a cigarette, and did not answer.

"Some of the niggers do amazing things that way," McMurtrey interposed tactfully.

As with the others, this conduct of their visitor jarred on the manager. From the moment of Peter Gee's arrival that afternoon Deacon had manifested a tendency to pick on him. He had disputed his statements and been generally rude.

"Maybe it's because Peter's got Chink blood in him," had been Andrews' hypothesis. "Deacon's Australian, you know, and they're daffy down there on color."

"I fancy that's it," McMurtrey had agreed. "But we can't permit any bullying, especially of a man like Peter Gee, who's whiter than most white men."

In this the manager had been in no wise wrong. Peter Gee was that rare creature, a good as well as clever Eurasian. In fact, it was the stolid integrity of the Chinese blood that toned the recklessness and licentiousness of the English blood which had run in his father's veins. Also, he was better educated than any man there, spoke better English as well as several other tongues, and knew and lived more of their own ideals of gentle manliness than they did themselves. And, finally, he

was a gentle soul. Violence he deprecated, though he had killed men in his time. Turbulence he abhorred. He always avoided it as he would the plague.

Captain Stapler stepped in to help McMurtrey:

"I remember, when I changed schooners and came into Altman, the niggers knew right off the bat it was me. I wasn't expected, either, much less to be in another craft. They told the trader it was me. He used the glasses, and wouldn't believe them. But they did know. Told me afterward they could see it sticking out all over the schooner that I was running her."

Deacon ignored him, and returned to the attack on the pearl-buyer.

"How do you know from the sound of the anchor that it was this whatever-you-called-him man?" he challenged.

"There are so many things that go to make up such a judgment," Peter Gee answered. "It's very hard to explain. It would require almost a text book."

"I thought so," Deacon sneered. "Explanation that doesn't explain is easy."

"Who's for bridge?" Eddy Little, the second clerk, interrupted, looking up expectantly and starting to shuffle. "You'll play, won't you, Peter?"

"If he does, he's a bluffer," Deacon cut back. "I'm getting tired of all this poppycock. Mr. Gee, you wi l favor me and put yourself in a better light if you tell how you know who that man was

that just dropped anchor. After that I'll play you piquet."

"I'd prefer bridge," Peter answered. "As for the other thing, it's something like this: By the sound it was a small craft—no square-rigger. No whistle, no siren, was blown—again a small craft. It anchored close in—still again a small craft, for steamers and big ships must drop hook outside the middle shoal. Now the entrance is tortuous. There is no recruiting nor trading captain in the group who dares to run the passage after dark. Certainly no stranger would. There *were* two exceptions. The first was Margonville. But he was executed by the High Court at Fiji. Remains the other exception, David Grief. Night or day, in any weather, he runs the passage. This is well known to all. A possible factor, in case Grief were somewhere else, would be some young dare-devil of a skipper. In this connection, in the first place, I don't know of any, nor does anybody else. In the second place, David Grief is in these waters, cruising on the *Gunga*, which is shortly scheduled to leave here for Karo-Karo. I spoke to Grief, on the *Gunga*, in Sandfly Passage, day before yesterday. He was putting a trader ashore on a new station. He said he was going to call in at Babo, and then come on to Goboto. He has had ample time to get here. I have heard an anchor drop. Who else than David Grief can it be? Captain Donovan is skipper of the *Gunga*, and him I know too well to believe that he'd run in to Goboto after dark unless his owner were

in charge. In a few minutes David Grief will enter through that door and say, 'In Guvutu they merely drink between drinks.' I'll wager fifty pounds he's the man that enters and that his words will be, 'In Guvutu they merely drink between drinks.'"

Deacon was for the moment crushed. The sullen blood rose darkly in his face.

"Well, he's answered you," McMurtrey laughed genially. "And I'll back his bet myself for a couple of sovereigns."

"Bridge! Who's going to take a hand?" Eddy Little cried impatiently. "Come on, Peter!"

"The rest of you play," Deacon said. "He and I are going to play piquet."

"I'd prefer bridge," Peter Gee said mildly.

"Don't you play piquet?"

The pearl-buyer nodded.

"Then come on. Maybe I can show I know more about that than I do about anchors."

"Oh, I say——" McMurtrey began.

"You can play bridge," Deacon shut him off. "We prefer piquet."

Reluctantly, Peter Gee was bullied into a game that he knew would be unhappy.

"Only a rubber," he said, as he cut for deal.

"For how much?" Deacon asked.

Peter Gee shrugged his shoulders. "As you please."

"Hundred up—five pounds a game?"

Peter Gee agreed.

"With the lurch double, of course, ten pounds?"

"All right," said Peter Gee.

At another table four of the others sat in at bridge. Captain Stapler, who was no card-player, looked on and replenished the long glasses of Scotch that stood at each man's right hand. McMurtrey, with poorly concealed apprehension, followed as well as he could what went on at the piquet table. His fellow Englishmen as well were shocked by the behavior of the Australian, and all were troubled by fear of some untoward act on his part. That he was working up his animosity against the half-caste, and that the explosion might come any time, was apparent to all.

"I hope Peter loses," McMurtrey said in an undertone.

"Not if he has any luck," Andrews answered. "He's a wizard at piquet. I know by experience."

That Peter Gee was lucky was patent from the continual badgering of Deacon, who filled his glass frequently. He had lost the first game, and, from his remarks, was losing the second, when the door opened and David Grief entered.

"In Guvutu they merely drink between drinks," he remarked casually to the assembled company, ere he gripped the manager's hand. "Hello, Mac! Say, my skipper's down in the whaleboat. He's got a silk shirt, a tie, and tennis shoes, all complete, but he wants you to send a pair of pants down. Mine are too small, but yours will fit him. Hello, Eddy! How's that *ngari-ngari?* You up, Jock? The miracle has happened. No

one down with fever, and no one remarkaby drunk." He sighed, "I suppose the night is young yet. Hello, Peter! Did you catch that big squall an hour after you left us? We had to let go the second anchor."

While he was being introduced to Deacon, McMurtrey dispatched a house-boy with the pants, and when Captain Donovan came in it was as a white man should—at least in Goboto.

Deacon lost the second game, and an outburst heralded the fact. Peter Gee devoted himself to lighting a cigarette and keeping quiet.

"What!—are you quitting because you're ahead?" Deacon demanded.

Grief raised his eyebrows questioningly to McMurtrey, who frowned back his own disgust.

"It's the rubber," Peter Gee answered.

"It takes three games to make a rubber. It's my deal. Come on!"

Peter Gee acquiesced, and the third game was on.

"Young whelp—he needs a lacing," McMurtrey muttered to Grief. "Come on, let us quit, you chaps. I want to keep an eye on him. If he goes too far I'll throw him out on the beach, company instructions or no."

"Who is he?" Grief queried.

"A left-over from last steamer. Company's orders to treat him nice. He's looking to invest in a plantation. Has a ten-thousand-pound letter of credit with the company. He's got 'all-white Australia' on the brain. Thinks because

his skin is white and because his father was once Attorney-General of the Commonwealth that he can be a cur. That's why he's picking on Peter, and you know Peter's the last man in the world to make trouble or incur trouble. Damn the company. I didn't engage to wet-nurse its infants with bank accounts. Come on, fill your glass, Grief. The man's a blighter, a blithering blighter."

"Maybe he's only young," Grief suggested.

"He can't contain his drink—that's clear." The manager glared his disgust and wrath. "If he raises a hand to Peter, so help me, I'll give him a licking myself, the little overgrown cad!"

The pearl-buyer pulled the pegs out of the cribbage board on which he was scoring and sat back. He had won the third game. He glanced across to Eddy Little, saying:

"I'm ready for the bridge, now."

"I wouldn't be a quitter," Deacon snarled.

"Oh, really, I'm tired of the game," Peter Gee assured him with his habitual quietness.

"Come on and be game," Deacon bullied. "One more. You can't take my money that way. I'm out fifteen pounds. Double or quits."

McMurtrey was about to interpose, but Grief restrained him with his eyes.

"If it positively is the last, all right," said Peter Gee, gathering up the cards. "It's my deal, I believe. As I understand it, this final is for fifteen pounds. Either you owe me thirty or we quit even?"

"That's it, chappie. Either we break even or I pay you thirty."

"Getting blooded, eh?" Grief remarked, drawing up a chair.

The other men stood or sat around the table, and Deacon played again in bad luck. That he was a good player was clear. The cards were merely running against him. That he could not take his ill luck with equanimity was equally clear. He was guilty of sharp, ugly curses, and he snapped and growled at the imperturbable half-caste. In the end Peter Gee counted out, while Deacon had not even made his fifty points. He glowered speechlessly at his opponent.

"Looks like a lurch," said Grief.

"Which is double," said Peter Gee.

"There's no need your telling me," Deacon snarled. "I've studied arithmetic. I owe you forty-five pounds. There, take it!"

The way in which he flung the nine five-pound notes on the table was an insult in itself. Peter Gee was even quieter, and flew no signals of resentment.

"You've got fool's luck, but you can't play cards, I can tell you that much," Deacon went on. "I could teach you cards."

The half-caste smiled and nodded acquiescence as he folded up the money.

"There's a little game called casino—I wonder if you ever heard of it?—a child's game."

"I've seen it played," the half-caste murmured gently.

"What's that?" snapped Deacon. "Maybe you think you can play it?"

"Oh, no, not for a moment. I'm afraid I haven't head enough for it."

"It's a bully game, casino," Grief broke in pleasantly. "I like it very much."

Deacon ignored him.

"I'll play you ten quid a game—thirty-one points out," was the challenge to Peter Gee. "And I'll show you how little you know about cards. Come on! Where's a full deck?"

"No, thanks," the half-caste answered. "They are waiting for me in order to make up a bridge set."

"Yes, come on," Eddy Little begged eagerly. "Come on, Peter, let's get started."

"Afraid of a little game like casino," Deacon girded. "Maybe the stakes are too high. I'll play you for pennies—or farthings, if you say so."

The man's conduct was a hurt and an affront to all of them. McMurtrey could stand it no longer.

"Now hold on, Deacon. He says he doesn't want to play. Let him alone."

Deacon turned raging upon his host; but before he could blurt out his abuse, Grief had stepped into the breach.

"I'd like to play casino with you," he said.

"What do you know about it?"

"Not much, but I'm willing to learn."

"Well, I'm not teaching for pennies to-night."

"Oh, that's all right," Grief answered. "I'll

play for almost any sum—within reason, of course."

Deacon proceeded to dispose of this intruder with one stroke.

"I'll play you a hundred pounds a game, if that will do you any good."

Grief beamed his delight. "That will be all right, very right. Let us begin. Do you count sweeps?"

Deacon was taken aback. He had not expected a Goboton trader to be anything but crushed by such a proposition.

"Do you count sweeps?" Grief repeated.

Andrews had brought him a new deck, and he was throwing out the joker.

"Certainly not," Deacon answered. "That's a sissy game."

"I'm glad," Grief coincided. "I don't like sissy games either."

"You don't, eh? Well, then, I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll play for five hundred pounds a game."

Again Deacon was taken aback.

"I'm agreeable," Grief said, beginning to shuffle. "Cards and spades go out first, of course, and then big and little casino, and the aces in the bridge order of value. Is that right?"

"You're a lot of jokers down here," Deacon laughed, but his laughter was strained. "How do I know you've got the money?"

"By the same token I know you've got it. Mac, how's my credit with the company?"

"For all you want," the manager answered.

"You personally guarantee that?" Deacon demanded.

"I certainly do," McMurtrey said. "Depend upon it, the company will honor his paper up and pass your letter of credit."

"Low deals," Grief said, placing the deck before Deacon on the table.

The latter hesitated in the midst of the cut and looked around with querulous misgiving at the faces of the others. The clerks and captains nodded.

"You're all strangers to me," Deacon complained. "How am I to know? Money on paper isn't always the real thing."

Then it was that Peter Gee, drawing a wallet from his pocket and borrowing a fountain pen from McMurtrey, went into action.

"I haven't gone to buying yet," the half-caste explained, "so the account is intact. I'll just indorse it over to you, Grief. It's for fifteen thousand. There, look at it."

Deacon intercepted the letter of credit as it was being passed across the table. He read it slowly, then glanced up at McMurtrey.

"Is that right?"

"Yes. It's just the same as your own, and just as good. The company's paper is always good."

Deacon cut the cards, won the deal, and gave them a thorough shuffle. But his luck was still against him, and he lost the game.

"Another game," he said. "We didn't say

how many, and you can't quit with me a loser. I want action."

Grief shuffled and passed the cards for the cut.

"Let's play for a thousand," Deacon said, when he had lost the second game. And when the thousand had gone the way of the two five hundred bets he proposed to play for two thousand.

"That's progression," McMurtrey warned, and was rewarded by a glare from Deacon. But the manager was insistent. "You don't have to play progression, Grief, unless you're foolish."

"Who's playing this game?" Deacon flamed at his host; and then, to Grief: "I've lost two thousand to you. Will you play for two thousand?"

Grief nodded, the fourth game began, and Deacon won. The manifest unfairness of such betting was known to all of them. Though he had lost three games out of four, Deacon had lost no money. By the child's device of doubling his wager with each loss, he was bound, with the first game he won, no matter how long delayed, to be even again.

He now evinced an unspoken desire to stop, but Grief passed the deck to be cut.

"What?" Deacon cried. "You want more?"

"Haven't got anything yet," Grief murmured whimsically, as he began the deal. "For the usual five hundred, I suppose?"

The shame of what he had done must have tingled in Deacon, for he answered, "No, we'll play for a thousand. And say! Thirty-one points is

too long. Why not twenty-one points out—if it isn't too rapid for you?"

"That will make it a nice, quick little game," Grief agreed.

The former method of play was repeated. Deacon lost two games, doubled the stake, and was again even. But Grief was patient, though the thing occurred several times in the next hour's play. Then happened what he was waiting for —a lengthening in the series of losing games for Deacon. The latter doubled to four thousand and lost, doubled to eight thousand and lost, and then proposed to double to sixteen thousand.

Grief shook his head. "You can't do that, you know. You're only ten thousand credit with the company."

"You mean you won't give me action?" Deacon asked hoarsely. "You mean that with eight thousand of my money you're going to quit?"

Grief smiled and shook his head.

"It's robbery, plain robbery," Deacon went on. "You take my money and won't give me action."

"No, you're wrong. I'm perfectly willing to give you what action you've got coming to you. You've got two thousand pounds of action yet."

"Well, we'll play it," Deacon took him up. "You cut."

The game was played in silence, save for irritable remarks and curses from Deacon. Silently the on-lookers filled and sipped their long Scotch glasses. Grief took no notice of his opponent's

outbursts, but concentrated on the game. He was really playing cards, and there were fifty-two in the deck to be kept track of, and of which he did keep track. Two thirds of the way through the last deal he threw down his hand.

"Cards put me out," he said. "I have twenty-seven."

"If you've made a mistake," Deacon threatened, his face white and drawn.

"Then I shall have lost. Count them."

Grief passed over his stack of takings, and Deacon, with trembling fingers, verified the count. He half shoved his chair back from the table and emptied his glass. He looked about him at unsympathetic faces.

"I fancy I'll be catching the next steamer for Sydney," he said, and for the first time his speech was quiet and without bluster.

As Grief told them afterward: "Had he whined or raised a roar I wouldn't have given him that last chance. As it was, he took his medicine like a man, and I had to do it."

Deacon glanced at his watch, simulated a weary yawn, and started to rise.

"Wait," Grief said. "Do you want further action?"

The other sank down in his chair, strove to speak, but could not, licked his dry lips, and nodded his head.

"Captain Donovan here sails at daylight in the *Gunga* for Karo-Karo," Grief began with seeming irrelevance. "Karo-Karo is a ring of sand in the

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sea, with a few thousand cocoanut trees. Pandanus grows there, but they can't grow sweet potatoes nor taro. There are about eight hundred natives, a king and two prime ministers, and the last three named are the only ones who wear any clothes. It's a sort of God-forsaken little hole, and once a year I send a schooner up from Goboto. The drinking water is brackish, but old Tom Butler has survived on it for a dozen years. He's the only white man there, and he has a boat's crew of five Santa Cruz boys who would run away or kill him if they could. That is why they were sent there. They can't run away. He is always supplied with the hard cases from the plantations. There are no missionaries. Two native Samoan teachers were clubbed to death on the beach when they landed several years ago.

"Naturally, you are wondering what it is all about. But have patience. As I have said, Captain Donovan sails on the annual trip to Karo-Karo at daylight to-morrow. Tom Butler is old, and getting quite helpless. I've tried to retire him to Australia, but he says he wants to remain and die on Karo-Karo, and he will in the next year or so. He's a queer old codger. Now the time is due for me to send some white man up to take the work off his hands. I wonder how you'd like the job. You'd have to stay two years.

"Hold on! I've not finished. You've talked frequently of action this evening. There's no action in betting away what you've never sweated for. The money you've lost to me was left you

by your father or some other relative who did the sweating. But two years of work as trader on Karo-Karo would mean something. I'll bet the ten thousand I've won from you against two years of your time. If you win, the money's yours. If you lose, you take the job at Karo-Karo and sail at daylight. Now that's what might be called real action. Will you play?"

Deacon could not speak. His throat lumped and he nodded his head as he reached for the cards.

"One thing more," Grief said. "I can do even better. If you lose, two years of your time are mine—naturally without wages. Nevertheless, I'll pay you wages. If your work is satisfactory, if you observe all instructions and rules, I'll pay you five thousand pounds a year for two years. The money will be deposited with the company, to be paid to you, with interest, when the time expires. Is that all right?"

"Too much so," Deacon stammered. "You are unfair to yourself. A trader only gets ten or fifteen pounds a month."

"Put it down to action, then," Grief said, with an air of dismissal. "And before we begin, I'll jot down several of the rules. These you will repeat aloud every morning during the two years —if you lose. They are for the good of your soul. When you have repeated them aloud seven hundred and thirty Karo-Karo mornings I am confident they will be in your memory to stay. Lend me your pen, Mac. Now, let's see——"

He wrote steadily and rapidly for some minutes, then proceeded to read the matter aloud:

"I must always remember that one man is as good as another, save and except when he thinks he is better.

"No matter how drunk I am I must not fail to be a gentleman. A gentleman is a man who is gentle. Note: It would be better not to get drunk.

"When I play a man's game with men, I must play like a man.

"A good curse, rightly used and rarely, is an efficient thing. Too many curses spoil the cursing. Note: A curse cannot change a card sequence nor cause the wind to blow.

"There is no license for a man to be less than a man. Ten thousand pounds cannot purchase such a license."

At the beginning of the reading Deacon's face had gone white with anger. Then had arisen, from neck to forehead, a slow and terrible flush that deepened to the end of the reading.

"There, that will be all," Grief said, as he folded the paper and tossed it to the center of the table. "Are you still ready to play the game?"

"I deserve it," Deacon muttered brokenly. "I've been an ass. Mr. Gee, before I know whether I win or lose, I want to apologize. Maybe it was the whiskey, I don't know, but I'm an ass, a cad, a bounder—everything that's rotten."

He held out his hand, and the half-caste took it beamingly.

"I say, Grief," he blurted out, "the boy's all right. Call the whole thing off, and let's forget it in a final nightcap."

Grief showed signs of debating, but Deacon cried:

"No; I won't permit it. I'm not a quitter. If it's Karo-Karo, it's Karo-Karo. There's nothing more to it."

"Right," said Grief, as he began the shuffle. "If he's the right stuff to go to Karo-Karo, Karo-Karo won't do him any harm."

The game was close and hard. Three times they divided the deck between them and "cards" was not scored. At the beginning of the fifth and last deal, Deacon needed three points to go out and Grief needed four. "Cards" alone would put Deacon out, and he played for "cards." He no longer muttered or cursed, and played his best game of the evening. Incidentally he gathered in the two black aces and the ace of hearts.

"I suppose you can name the four cards I hold," he challenged, as the last of the deal was exhausted and he picked up his hand.

Grief nodded.

"Then name them."

"The knave of spades, the deuce of spades, the trey of hearts, and the ace of diamonds," Grief answered.

Those behind Deacon and looking at his hand made no sign. Yet the naming had been correct.

"I fancy you play casino better than I," Deacon

acknowledged. "I can name only three of yours, a knave, an ace, and big casino."

"Wrong. There aren't five aces in the deck. You've taken in three and you hold the fourth in your hand now."

"By Jove, you're right," Deacon admitted. I did scoop in three. Anyway, I'll make 'cards' on you. That's all I need."

"I'll let you save little casino"— Grief paused to calculate. "Yes, and the ace as well, and still I'll make 'cards' and go out with big casino. Play."

"No 'cards,' and I win!" Deacon exulted as the last of the hand was played. "I go out on little casino and the four aces. 'Big casino' and 'spades' only bring you to twenty."

Grief shook his head. "Some mistake, I'm afraid."

"No," Deacon declared positively. "I counted every card I took in. That's the one thing I was correct on. I've twenty-six, and you've twenty-six."

"Count again," Grief said.

Carefully and slowly, with trembling fingers, Deacon counted the cards he had taken. There were twenty-five. He reached over to the corner of the table, took up the rules Grief had written, folded them, and put them in his pocket. Then he emptied his glass, and stood up. Captain Donovan looked at his watch, yawned, and also rose.

"Going aboard, Captain?" Deacon asked.

"Yes," was the answer. "What time shall I send the whaleboat for you?"

"I'll go with you now. We'll pick up my luggage from the *Billy* as we go by. I was sailing on her for Babo in the morning."

Deacon shook hands all around, after receiving a final pledge of good luck on Karo-Karo.

"Does Tom Butler play cards?" he asked Grief.

"Solitaire," was the answer.

"Then I'll teach him double solitaire." Deacon turned toward the door, where Captain Donovan waited, and added with a sigh, "And I fancy he'll skin me, too, if he plays like the rest of you island men."

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NOVEMBER 23

ON CONCILIATION WITH THE AMERICAN COLONIES

I HAVE in general no very exalted opinion of the virtue of paper government; nor of any politics in which the plan is to be wholly separated from the execution. But when I saw that anger and violence prevailed every day more and more, and that things were hastening toward an incurable alienation of our Colonies, I confess my caution gave way. I felt this as one of those few moments in which decorum yields to a higher duty. Public calamity is a mighty leveler; and there are occasions when any, even the slightest, chance of doing good must be laid hold on, even by the most inconsiderable person.

To restore order and repose to an empire so great and so distracted as ours, is, merely in the attempt, an undertaking that would ennoble the flights of the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest understanding. Struggling a good while with these thoughts, by degrees I felt myself more firm. I derived, at length, some confidence from what in other circumstances usually produces timidity. I grew less anxious, even from the idea of my own insignificance. For, judging of what you are by

what you ought to be, I persuaded myself that you would not reject a reasonable proposition because it had nothing but its reason to recommend it. On the other hand, being totally destitute of all shadow of influence, natural or adventitious, I was very sure that, if my proposition were futile or dangerous—if it were weakly conceived, or improperly timed—there was nothing exterior to it of power to awe, dazzle, or delude you. You will see it just as it is; and you will treat it just as it deserves.

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord fomented, from principle, in all parts of the Empire; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace; sought in its natural course, and in its ordinary haunts. It is peace sought in the spirit of peace, and laid in principles purely pacific. I propose, by removing the ground of the difference, and by restoring the former unsuspecting confidence of the Colonies in the Mother Country, to give permanent satisfaction to your people; and (far from a scheme of ruling by discord) to reconcile them to each other in the same act and by the bond of the very same interest which reconciles them to British government.

My idea is nothing more. Refined policy ever has been the parent of confusion; and ever will be

so, as long as the world endures. Plain good intention, which is as easily discovered at the first view as fraud is surely detected at last, is, let me say, of no mean force in the government of mankind. Genuine simplicity of heart is an healing and cementing principle. My plan, therefore, being formed upon the most simple grounds imaginable, may disappoint some people when they hear it. It has nothing to recommend it to the pruriency of curious ears. There is nothing at all new and captivating in it. It has nothing of the splendor of the project which has been lately laid upon your table by the noble lord in the blue ribbon. It does not propose to fill your lobby with squabbling Colony agents, who will require the interposition of your mace, at every instant, to keep the peace amongst them. It does not institute a magnificent auction of finance, where captivated provinces come to general ransom by bidding against each other, until you knock down the hammer, and determine a proportion of payments beyond all the powers of algebra to equalize and settle.

. . . I mean to give peace. Peace implies reconciliation; and where there has been a material dispute, reconciliation does in a manner always imply concession on the one part or on the other. In this state of things, I make no difficulty in affirming that the proposal ought to originate from us. Great and acknowledged force is not impaired either in effect or in opinion, by an unwillingness

to exert itself. The superior power may offer peace with honor and with safety. Such an offer from such a power will be attributed to magnanimity. But the concessions of the weak are the concessions of fear. When such a one is disarmed, he is wholly at the mercy of his superior; and he loses forever that time and those chances, which, as they happen to all men, are the strength and resources of all inferior power.

The capital leading questions on which you must this day decide are these two: First, whether you ought to concede; and secondly, what your concession ought to be. On the first of these questions we have gained, as I have just taken the liberty of observing to you, some ground. But I am sensible that a good deal more is still to be done. Indeed, Sir, to enable us to determine both on the one and the other of these great questions with a firm and precise judgment, I think it may be necessary to consider distinctly the true nature and the peculiar circumstances of the object which we have before us; because after all our struggle, whether we will or not, we must govern America according to that nature and to those circumstances, and not according to our own imaginations, nor according to abstract ideas of right—by no means according to mere general theories of government, the resort to which appears to me, in our present situation, no better than arrant trifling. I shall therefore endeavor, with your leave, to lay before you some of the most material of these circumstances in as full and as clear a manner as I am able to state them.

The first thing that we have to consider with regard to the nature of the object is—the number of people in the Colonies. I have taken for some years a good deal of pains on that point. I can by no calculation justify myself in placing the number below two millions of inhabitants of our own European blood and color, besides at least five hundred thousand others, who form no inconsiderable part of the strength and opulence of the whole. This, Sir, is, I believe, about the true number. There is no occasion to exaggerate where plain truth is of so much weight and importance. But whether I put the present numbers too high or too low is a matter of little moment. Such is the strength with which population shoots in that part of the world, that, state the numbers as high as we will, whilst the dispute continues, the exaggeration ends. Whilst we are discussing any given magnitude, they are grown to it. Whilst we spend our time in deliberating on the mode of governing two millions, we shall find we have millions more to manage. Your children do not grow faster from infancy to manhood than they spread from families to communities, and from villages to nations.

I put this consideration of the present and the growing numbers in the front of our deliberation, because, Sir, this consideration will make it evident to a blunter discernment than yours, that no partial, narrow, contracted, pinched, occasional system will be at all suitable to such an object. It will show you that it is not to be considered as one of those *minima* which are out of the eye and

consideration of the law; not a paltry excrescence of the state; not a mean dependent, who may be neglected with little damage and provoked with little danger. It will prove that some degree of care and caution is required in the handling such an object; it will show that you ought not, in reason, to trifle with so large a mass of the interests and feelings of the human race. You could at no time do so without guilt; and be assured you will not be able to do it long with impunity.

But the population of this country, the great and growing population, though a very important consideration, will lose much of its weight if not combined with other circumstances. The commerce of your Colonies is out of all proportion beyond the numbers of the people. This ground of their commerce indeed has been trod some days ago, and with great ability, by a distinguished person at your bar. This gentleman, after thirty-five years—it is so long since he first appeared at the same place to plead for the commerce of Great Britain—has come again before you to plead the same cause, without any other effect of time, than that to the fire of imagination and extent of erudition which even then marked him as one of the first literary characters of his age, he has added a consummate knowledge in the commercial interest of his country, formed by a long course of enlightened and discriminating experience.

The trade with America alone is now within less than £500,000 of being equal to what this great commercial nation, England, carried on at the

beginning of this century with the whole world! If I had taken the largest year of those on your table, it would rather have exceeded. But, it will be said, is not this American trade an unnatural protuberance, that has drawn the juices from the rest of the body? The reverse. It is the very food that has nourished every other part into its present magnitude. Our general trade has been greatly augmented, and augmented more or less in almost every part to which it ever extended; but with this material difference, that of the six millions which in the beginning of the century constituted the whole mass of our export commerce, the Colony trade was but one-twelfth part; it is now (as a part of sixteen millions) considerably more than a third of the whole. This is the relative proportion of the importance of the Colonies at these two periods; and all reasoning concerning our mode of treating them must have this proportion as its basis; or it is a reasoning weak, rotten, and sophistical.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot prevail on myself to hurry over this great consideration. *It is good for us to be here.* We stand where we have an immense view of what is, and what is past. Clouds, indeed, and darkness, rest upon the future. Let us, however, before we descend from this noble eminence, reflect that this growth of our national prosperity has happened within the short period of the life of man. It has happened within sixty-eight years. There are those alive whose memory might touch the two extremities. For instance,

my Lord Bathurst might remember all the stages of the progress. He was in 1704 of an age at least to be made to comprehend such things. He was then old enough *acta parentum jam legere, et quæ sit potuit cognoscere virtus.* Suppose, Sir, that the angel of this auspicious youth, forseeing the many virtues which made him one of the most amiable, as he is one of the most fortunate, men of his age, had opened to him in vision that when in the fourth generation the third Prince of the House of Brunswick had sat twelve years on the throne of that nation which, by the happy issue of moderate and healing counsels, was to be made Great Britain, he should see his son, Lord Chancellor of England, turn back the current of hereditary dignity to its fountain, and raise him to a higher rank of peerage, whilst he enriched the family with a new one—if, amidst these bright and happy scenes of domestic honor and prosperity, that angel should have drawn up the curtain, and unfolded the rising glories of his country, and, whilst he was gazing with admiration on the then commercial grandeur of England, the genius should point out to him a little speck, scarcely visible in the mass of the national interest, a small seminal principle, rather than a formed body, and should tell him: "Young man, there is America—which at this day serves for little more than to amuse you with stories of savage men, and uncouth manners; yet shall, before you taste of death, show itself equal to the whole of that commerce which now attracts the envy of the world. Whatever England has

been growing to by a progressive increase of improvement, brought in by varieties of people, by succession of civilizing conquests and civilizing settlements in a series of seventeen hundred years, you shall see as much added to her by America in the course of a single life!" If this state of his country had been foretold to him, would it not require all the sanguine credulity of youth, and all the fervid glow of enthusiasm, to make him believe it? Fortunate man, he has lived to see it! Fortunate, indeed, if he lives to see nothing that shall vary the prospect, and cloud the setting of his day!

. . . America, gentlemen say, is a noble object. It is an object well worth fighting for. Certainly it is, if fighting a people be the best way of gaining them. Gentlemen in this respect will be led to their choice of means by their complexions and their habits. Those who understand the military art will of course have some predilection for it. Those who wield the thunder of the state may have more confidence in the efficacy of arms. But I confess, possibly for want of this knowledge, my opinion is much more in favor of prudent management than of force; considering force not as an odious, but a feeble instrument for preserving a people so numerous, so active, so growing, so spirited as this, in a profitable and subordinate connection with us.

First, Sir, permit me to observe that the use of force alone is but temporary. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity

of subduing again; and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered.

My next objection is its uncertainty. Terror is not always the effect of force, and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource; for, conciliation failing, force remains; but, force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness; but they can never be begged as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence.

A further objection to force is, that you impair the object by your very endeavors to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover; but depreciated, sunk, wasted, and consumed in the contest. Nothing less will content me than *whole America.* I do not choose to consume its strength along with our own, because in all parts it is the British strength that I consume. I do not choose to be caught by a foreign enemy at the end of this exhausting conflict; and still less in the midst of it. I may escape; but I can make no insurance against such an event. Let me add, that I do not choose wholly to break the American spirit; because it is the spirit that has made the country.

Lastly, we have no sort of experience in favor of force as an instrument in the rule of our Colonies. Their growth and their utility has been owing to methods altogether different. Our ancient indulgence has been said to be pursued to a fault. It may be so. But we know if feeling is evidence,

that our fault was more tolerable than our attempt to mend it; and our sin far more salutary than our penitence.

These, Sir, are my reasons for not entertaining that high opinion of untried force by which many gentlemen, for whose sentiments in other particulars I have great respect, seem to be so greatly captivated. But there is still behind a third consideration concerning this object which serves to determine my opinion on the sort of policy which ought to be pursued in the management of America, even more than its population and its commerce—I mean its temper and character.

In this character of the Americans, a love of freedom is the predominating feature which marks and distinguishes the whole; and as an ardent is always a jealous affection, your Colonies become suspicious, restive, and untractable whenever they see the least attempt to wrest from them by force, or shuffle from them by chicane, what they think the only advantage worth living for. This fierce spirit of liberty is stronger in the English Colonies probably than in any other people of the earth, and this from a great variety of powerful causes; which, to understand the true temper of their minds and the direction which this spirit takes, it will not be amiss to lay open somewhat more largely.

First, the people of the Colonies are descendants of Englishmen. England, Sir, is a nation which still, I hope, respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The Colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most pre-

dominant; and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas, and on English principles. Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object; and every nation has formed to itself some favorite point, which by way of eminence becomes the criterion of their happiness. It happened, you know, Sir, that the great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates; or on the balance among the several orders of the state. The question of money was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens, and most eloquent tongues, have been exercised; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered. In order to give the fullest satisfaction concerning the importance of this point, it was not only necessary for those who in argument defended the excellence of the English Constitution to insist on this privilege of granting money as a dry point of fact, and to prove that the right had been acknowledged in ancient parchments and blind usages to reside in a certain body called a House of Commons. They went much farther; they attempted to prove, and they succeeded, that in theory it ought to be so, from the particular nature of a House of Commons as an immediate representative of the people, whether

the old records had delivered this oracle or not. They took infinite pains to inculcate, as a fundamental principle, that in all monarchies the people must in effect themselves, mediately or immediately, possess the power of granting their own money, or no shadow of liberty can subsist. The Colonies draw from you, as with their life-blood, these ideas and principles. Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed and attached on this specific point of taxing. Liberty might be safe, or might be endangered, in twenty other particulars, without their being much pleased or alarmed. Here they felt its pulse; and as they found that beat, they thought themselves sick or sound. I do not say whether they were right or wrong in applying your general arguments to their own case. It is not easy, indeed, to make a monopoly of theorems and corollaries. The fact is, that they did thus apply those general arguments; and your mode of governing them, whether through lenity or indolence, through wisdom or mistake, confirmed them in the imagination that they, as well as you, had an interest in these common principles.

They were further confirmed in this pleasing error by the form of their provincial legislative assemblies. Their governments are popular in an high degree; some are merely popular; in all, the popular representative is the most weighty; and this share of the people in their ordinary government never fails to inspire them with lofty sentiments, and with a strong aversion from whatever tends to deprive them of their chief importance.

If anything were wanting to this necessary operation of the form of government, religion would have given it a complete effect. Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new people is no way worn out or impaired; and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are Protestants; and of that kind which is the most averse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favorable to liberty, but built upon it. I do not think, Sir, that the reason of this averseness in the dissenting churches from all that looks like absolute government is so much to be sought in their religious tenets, as in their history. Every one knows that the Roman Catholic religion is at least co-eval with most of the governments where it prevails; that it has generally gone hand in hand with them, and received great favor and every kind of support from authority. The Church of England too was formed from her cradle under the nursing care of regular government. But the dissenting interests have sprung up in direct opposition to all the ordinary powers of the world, and could justify that opposition only on a strong claim to natural liberty. Their very existence depended on the powerful and unremitted assertion of that claim. All Protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of dissent. But the religion most prevalent in our Northern Colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the dissidence of dissent, and the protestantism of the Protestant religion. This religion, under a variety of de-

nominations agreeing in nothing but in the communion of the spirit of liberty, is predominant in most of the Northern Provinces, where the Church of England, notwithstanding its legal rights, is in reality no more than a sort of private sect, not comprising most probably the tenth of the people. The Colonists left England when this spirit was high, and in the emigrants was the highest of all; and even that stream of foreigners which has been constantly flowing into these Colonies has, for the greatest part, been composed of dissenters from the establishments of their several countries, who have brought with them a temper and character far from alien to that of the people with whom they mixed.

Sir, I can perceive by their manner that some gentlemen object to the latitude of this description, because in the Southern Colonies the Church of England forms a large body, and has a regular establishment. It is certainly true. There is, however, a circumstance attending these Colonies which, in my opinion, fully counterbalances this difference, and makes the spirit of liberty still more high and haughty than in those to the northward. It is that in Virginia and the Carolinas they have a vast multitude of slaves. Where this is the case in any part of the world, those who are free are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there, that freedom, as in countries where it is a common blessing and as broad and general

as the air, may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude; liberty looks, amongst them, like something that is more noble and liberal. I do not mean, Sir, to commend the superior morality of this sentiment, which has at least as much pride as virtue in it; but I cannot alter the nature of man. The fact is so; and these people of the Southern Colonies are much more strongly, and with an higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty than those to the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths; such were our Gothic ancestors; such in our days were the Poles; and such will be all masters of slaves, who are not slaves themselves. In such a people the haughtiness of domination combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible.

Permit me, Sir, to add another circumstance in our Colonies which contributes no mean part toward the growth and effect of this untractable spirit. I mean their education. In no country perhaps in the world is the law so general a study. The profession itself is numerous and powerful; and in most provinces it takes the lead. The greater number of the deputies sent to the Congress were lawyers. But all who read, and most do read, endeavor to obtain some smattering in that science. I have been told by an eminent bookseller, that in no branch of his business, after tracts of popular devotion, were so many books as those on the law exported to the Plantations. The

Colonists have now fallen into the way of printing them for their own use. I hear that they have sold nearly as many of Blackstone's Commentaries in America as in England. General Gage marks out this disposition very particularly in a letter on your table. He states that all the people in his government are lawyers, or smatterers in law; and that in Boston they have been enabled, by successful chicane, wholly to evade many parts of one of your capital penal constitutions. The smartness of debate will say that this knowledge ought to teach them more clearly the rights of legislature, their obligations to obedience, and the penalties of rebellion. All this is mighty well. But my honorable and learned friend on the floor, who condescends to mark what I say for animadversion, will disdain that ground. He has heard, as well as I, that when great honors and great emoluments do not win over this knowledge to the service of the state, it is a formidable adversary to government. If the spirit be not tamed and broken by these happy methods, it is stubborn and litigious. *Abeunt studia in mores.* This study renders men acute, inquisitive, dexterous, prompt in attack, ready in defence, full of resources. In other countries, the people, more simple, and of a less mercurial cast, judge of an ill principle in government only by an actual grievance; here they anticipate the evil, and judge of the pressure of the grievance by the badness of the principle. They augur misgovernment at a dis-

tance, and snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze.

The last cause of this disobedient spirit in the Colonies is hardly less powerful than the rest, as it is not merely moral, but laid deep in the natural constitution of things. Three thousand miles of ocean lie between you and them. No contrivance can prevent the effect of this distance in weakening government. Seas roll, and months pass, between the order and the execution; and the want of a speedy explanation of a single point is enough to defeat a whole system. You have, indeed, winged ministers of vengeance, who carry your bolts in their pounces to the remotest verge of the sea. But there a power steps in that limits the arrogance of raging passions and furious elements, and says, *So far shalt thou go, and no farther.* Who are you, that you should fret and rage, and bite the chains of nature? Nothing worse happens to you than does to all nations who have extensive empire, and it happens in all the forms into which empire can be thrown. In large bodies the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt and Arabia and Kurdistan as he governs Thrace; nor has he the same dominion in Crimea and Algiers which he has at Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster. The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein, that he may govern at all; and the whole of the force and vigor of his authority in his center is derived from a prudent

relaxation in all his borders. Spain, in her provinces, is, perhaps, not so well obeyed as you are in yours. She complies, too; she submits; she watches times. This is the immutable condition, the eternal law of extensive and detached empire.

EDMUND BURKE.

NOVEMBER 24 AND 25

BEAUTY AND THE JACOBIN*

CHARACTERS

ANNE
LOUIS
ELOISE
VALSIN
DOSSONVILLE

Our scene is in a rusty lodging-house of the Lower Town, Boulogne-sur-Mer, and the time, the early twilight of dark November in northern France. This particular November is dark indeed, for it is November of the year 1793, Frimaire of the Terror. The garret room disclosed to us, like the evening lowering outside its one window, and like the times, is mysterious, obscure, smoked with perplexing shadows; these flying and staggering to echo the shiftings of a young man writing at a desk by the light of a candle.

We are just under the eaves here; the dim ceiling slants; and there are two doors: that in the rear wall is closed; the other, upon our right, and

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evidently leading to an inner chamber, we find ajar. The furniture of this mean apartment is chipped, faded, insecure, yet still possessed of a haggard elegance; shamed odds and ends, cheaply acquired by the proprietor of the lodging-house, no doubt at an auction of the confiscated leavings of some emigrant noble. The single window, square and mustily curtained, is so small that it cannot be imagined to admit much light on the brightest of days; however, it might afford a lodger a limited view of the houses opposite and the street below. In fact, as our eyes grow accustomed to the obscurity we discover it serving this very purpose at the present moment, for a tall woman stands close by in the shadow, peering between the curtains with the distrustfulness of a picket thrown far out into an enemy's country. Her coarse blouse and skirt, new and as ill-fitting as sacks, her shopwoman's bonnet and cheap veil, and her rough shoes are naïvely denied by her sensitive, pale hands and the highbred and inbred face, long profoundly marked by loss and fear, and now very white, very watchful. She is not more than forty, but her hair, glimpsed beneath the clumsy bonnet, shows much grayer than need be at that age. This is ANNE DE LASEYNE.

The intent young man at the desk, easily recognizable as her brother, fair and of a singular physical delicacy, is a finely completed product of his race; one would pronounce him gentle in each sense of the word. His costume rivals his sister's in

the innocence of its attempt at disguise: he wears a carefully soiled carter's frock, rough new gaiters, and a pair of dangerously aristocratic shoes, which are not too dusty to conceal the fact that they are of excellent make and lately sported buckles. A tousled cap of rabbit-skin, exhibiting a tricolor cockade, crowns these anomalies, though not at present, his thin, blond curls, for it has been tossed upon a dressing-table which stands against the wall to the left. He is younger than MADAME DE LASEYNE, *probably by more than ten years; and, though his features so strikingly resemble hers, they are free from the permanent impress of pain which she bears like a mourning badge upon her own.*

He is expending a feverish attention upon his task, but with patently unsatisfactory results; for he whispers and mutters to himself, bites the feather of his pen, shakes his head forebodingly, and again and again crumples a written sheet and throws it upon the floor. Whenever this happens ANNE DE LASEYNE *casts a white glance at him over her shoulder—his desk is in the center of the room—her anxiety is visibly increased, and the temptation to speak less and less easily controlled, until at last she gives way to it. Her voice is low and hurried.*

ANNE. Louis, it is growing dark very fast.

LOUIS. I had not observed it, my sister. [*He lights a second candle from the first; then, pen in mouth, scratches at his writing with a little knife.*]

ANNE. People are still crowding in front of the wine shop across the street.

LOUIS [*smiling with one side of his mouth*]. Naturally. Reading the list of the proscribed that came at noon. Also waiting, amiable vultures, for the next bulletin from Paris. It will give the names of those guillotined day before yesterday. For a good bet: our own names [*he nods toward the other room*]—yes, hers, too—are all three in the former. As for the latter—well, they can't get us in that now.

ANNE [*eagerly*]. Then you are certain that we are safe?

LOUIS. I am certain only that they cannot murder us day before yesterday. [*As he bends his head to his writing a woman comes in languidly through the open door, bearing an armful of garments, among which one catches the gleam of fine silk, glimpses of lace and rich furs—a disordered burden which she dumps pell-mell into a large portmanteau lying open upon a chair near the desk. This newcomer is of a startling gold-and-ivory beauty; a beauty quite literally striking, for at the very first glance the whole force of it hits the beholder like a snowball in the eye; a beauty so obvious, so completed, so rounded, that it is painful; a beauty to rivet the unenvious stare of women, but from the full blast of which either king or man-peasant would stagger away to the confessional. The egregious luster of it is not breathed upon even by its overspreading of sullen revolt, as its possessor carelessly arranges the garments in the portmanteau. She wears a dress all gray, of a coarse texture, but ex-*

quisitely fitted to her; nothing could possibly be plainer, or of a more revealing simplicity. She might be twenty-two; at least it is certain that she is not thirty. At her coming, LOUIS *looks up with a sigh of poignant wistfulness, evidently a habit; for as he leans back to watch her he sighs again. She does not so much as glance at him, but speaks absently to* MADAME DE LASEYNE. *Her voice is superb, as it should be; deep and musical, with a faint, silvery huskiness.*]

ELOISE [*the newcomer*]. Is he still there?

ANNE. I lost sight of him in the crowd. I think he has gone. If only he does not come back!

LOUIS [*with grim conviction*]. He will.

ANNE. I am trying to hope not.

ELOISE. I have told you from the first that you overestimate his importance. Haven't I said it often enough?

ANNE [*under her breath*]. You have!

ELOISE [*coldly*]. He will not harm you.

ANNE [*looking out of the window*]. More people down there; they are running to the wine shop.

LOUIS. Gentle idlers! [*The sound of triumphant shouting comes up from the street below.*] That means that the list of the guillotined has arrived from Paris.

ANNE [*shivering*]. They are posting it in the wine-shop window. [*The shouting increases suddenly to a roar of hilarity, in which the shrilling of women mingled.*]

LOUIS. Ah! One remarks that the list is a long one. The good people are well satisfied with

it. [*To* ELOISE:] My cousin, in this amiable populace which you champion, do you never scent something of—well, something of the graveyard scavenger? [*She offers the response of an unmoved glance in his direction, and slowly goes out by the door at which she entered.* LOUIS *sighs again and returns to his scribbling.*]

ANNE [*nervously*]. Haven't you finished, Louis?

LOUIS [*indicating the floor strewn with crumpled slips of paper*]. A dozen.

ANNE. Not good enough?

LOUIS [*with a rueful smile*]. I have lived to discover that among all the disadvantages of being a Peer of France the most dangerous is that one is so poor a forger. Truly, however, our parents are not to be blamed for neglecting to have me instructed in this art; evidently they perceived I had no talent for it. [*Lifting a sheet from the desk.*] Oh, vile! I am not even an amateur. [*He leans back, tapping the paper thoughtfully with his pen.*] Do you suppose the Fates took all the trouble to make the Revolution simply to teach me that I have no skill in forgery? Listen. [*He reads what he has written.*] "Committee of Public Safety. In the name of the Republic. To all Officers, Civil and Military: Permit the Citizen Balsage"—that's myself, remember—"and the Citizeness Virginie Balsage, his sister"—that's you, Anne—"and the Citizeness Marie Balsage, his second sister"—that is Eloise, you understand—"to embark in the vessel *Jeune Pierrette* from the port of Boulogne for Barcelona. Signed: Billaud-

Varenne. Carnot. Robespierre." Execrable! [*He tears up the paper, scattering the fragments on the floor.*] I am not even sure it is the proper form. Ah, that Dossonville!

ANNE. But Dossonville helped us——

LOUIS. At a price. Dossonville! An individual of marked attainment, not only in penmanship, but in the art of plausibility. Before I paid him he swore that the passports he forged for us would take us not only out of Paris, but out of the country.

ANNE. Are you sure we must have a separate permit to embark?

LOUIS. The captain of the *Jeune Pierrette* sent one of his sailors to tell me. There is a new Commissioner from the National Committee, he said, and a special order was issued this morning. They have an officer and a file of the National Guard on the quay to see that the order is obeyed.

ANNE. But we bought passports in Paris. Why can't we here?

LOUIS. Send out a street-crier for an accomplished forger? My poor Anne! We can only hope that the lieutenant on the quay may be drunk when he examines my dreadful "permit." Pray a great thirst upon him, my sister! [*He looks at a watch which he draws from beneath his frock.*] Four o'clock. At five the tide in the river is poised at its highest; then it must run out, and the *Jeune Pierrette* with it. We have an hour. I return to my crime. [*He takes a fresh sheet of paper and begins to write.*]

ANNE [*urgently*]. Hurry, Louis!

LOUIS. Watch for Master Spy.

ANNE. I cannot see him. [*There is silence for a time, broken only by the nervous scratching of* LOUIS'S *pen.*]

LOUIS [*at work*]. Still you don't see him?

ANNE. No. The people are dispersing. They seem in a good humor.

LOUIS. Ah, if they knew—— [*He breaks off, examines his latest effort attentively, and finds it unsatisfactory, as is evinced by the noiseless whistle of disgust to which his lips form themselves. He discards the sheet and begins another, speaking rather absently as he does so.*] I suppose I have the distinction to be one of the most hated men in our country, now that all the decent people have left it—so many by a road something of the shortest! Yes, these merry gentlemen below there would be still merrier if they knew they had within their reach a forfeited "Emigrant." I wonder how long it would take them to climb the break-neck flights to our door. Lord, there'd be a race for it! Prize-money, too, I fancy, for the first with his bludgeon.

ANNE [*lamentably*]. Louis, Louis! Why didn't you lie safe in England?

LOUIS [*smiling*]. Anne, Anne! I had to come back for a good sister of mine.

ANNE. But I could have escaped alone.

LOUIS. That is it—"alone"! [*He lowers his voice as he glances toward the open door.*] For she would not have moved at all if I hadn't come to bully her into it. A fanatic, a fanatic!

ANNE [*brusquely*]. She is a fool. Therefore be patient with her.

LOUIS [*warningly*]. Hush.

ELOISE [*in a loud, careless tone from the other room*]. Oh, I heard you! What does it matter? [*She returns, carrying a handsome skirt and bodice of brocade and a woman's long mantle of light-green cloth, hooded and lined with fur. She drops them into the portmanteau and closes it.*] There! I've finished your packing for you.

LOUIS [*rising*]. My cousin, I regret that we could not provide servants for this flight. [*Bowing formally.*] I regret that we have been compelled to ask you to do a share of what is necessary.

ELOISE [*turning to go out again*]. That all?

LOUIS [*lifting the portmanteau*]. I fear——

ELOISE [*with assumed fatigue*]. Yes, you usually do. What now?

LOUIS [*flushing painfully*]. The portmanteau is too heavy. [*He returns to the desk, sits and busies himself with his writing, keeping his grieved face from her view.*]

ELOISE. You mean you're too weak to carry it?

LOUIS. Suppose at the last moment it becomes necessary to hasten exceedingly——

ELOISE. You mean, suppose you had to run, you'd throw away the portmanteau. [*Contemptuously.*] Oh, I don't doubt you'd do it!

LOUIS [*forcing himself to look up at her cheerfully*]. I dislike to leave my baggage upon the field, but in case of a rout it might be a temptation—if it were an impediment.

ANNE [*peremptorily*]. Don't waste time. Lighten the portmanteau.

LOUIS. You may take out everything of mine.

ELOISE. There's nothing of yours in it except your cloak. You don't suppose——

ANNE. Take out that heavy brocade of mine.

ELOISE. Thank you for not wishing to take out my fur-lined cloak and freezing me at sea!

LOUIS [*gently*]. Take out both the cloak and the dress.

ELOISE [*astounded*]. What!

LOUIS. You shall have mine. It is as warm, but not so heavy.

ELOISE [*angrily*]. Oh, I am sick of your eternal packing and unpacking! I am sick of it!

ANNE. Watch at the window, then. [*She goes swiftly to the portmanteau, opens it, tosses out the green mantle and the brocaded skirt and bodice, and tests the weight of the portmanteau.*] I think it will be light enough now, Louis.

LOUIS. Do not leave those things in sight. If our landlord should come in——

ANNE. I'll hide them in the bed in the next room. Eloise! [*She points imperiously to the window.* ELOISE *goes to it slowly and for a moment makes a scornful pretense of being on watch there; but as soon as* MADAME DE LASEYNE *has left the room she turns leaning against the wall and regarding* LOUIS *with languid amusement. He continues to struggle with his ill-omened "permit," but, by and by, becoming aware of her gaze, glances consciously over his shoulder and meets her half-veiled eyes. Col-*

oring, he looks away, stares dreamily at nothing, sighs, and finally writes again, absently, like a man under a spell, which, indeed, he is. The pen drops from his hand with a faint click upon the floor. He makes the movement of a person suddenly awakened, and, holding his last writing near one of the candles, examines it critically. Then he breaks into low, bitter laughter.]

ELOISE [*unwillingly curious*]. You find something amusing?

LOUIS. Myself. One of my mistakes, that is all.

ELOISE [*indifferently*]. Your mirth must be indefatigable if you can still laugh at those.

LOUIS. I agree. I am a history of error.

ELOISE. You should have made it a vocation; it is your one genius. And yet—truly because I am a fool I think, as Anne says—I let you hector me into a sillier mistake than any of yours.

LOUIS. When?

ELOISE [*flinging out her arms*]. Oh, then I consented to this absurd journey, this *tiresome* journey—with *you!* An "escape"? From nothing. In "disguise." Which doesn't disguise.

LOUIS [*his voice taut with the effort for self-command*]. My sister asked me to be patient with you, Eloise——

ELOISE. Because I am a fool, yes. Thanks. [*Shrewishly.*] And then, my worthy young man? [*He rises abruptly, smarting almost beyond endurance.*]

LOUIS [*breathing deeply*]. Have I not been patient with you?

ELOISE [*with a flash of energy*]. If I have asked you to be anything whatever—with me—pray recall the petition to my memory.

LOUIS [*beginning to let himself go*]. Patient! Have I ever been anything but patient with you? Was I not patient with you five years ago when you first harangued us on your "Rights of Man" and your monstrous republicanism? Where you got hold of it all I don't know——

ELOISE [*kindling*]. Ideas, my friend. Naturally, incomprehensible to you. Books! Brains! Men!

LOUIS. "Books! Brains! Men!" Treason, poison, and mobs! Oh, I could laugh at you then: they were only beginning to kill us, and I was patient. Was I not patient with you when these Republicans of yours drove us from our homes, from our country, stole all we had, assassinated us in dozens, in hundreds, murdered our King? [*He walks the floor, gesticulating nervously.*] When I saw relative after relative of my own—aye, and of yours, too—dragged to the abattoir—even poor, harmless, kind André de Laseyne, whom they took simply because he was my brother-in-law—was I not patient? And when I came back to Paris for you and Anne, and had to lie hid in a stable, every hour in greater danger because you would not be persuaded to join us, was I not patient? And when you finally did consent, but protested every step of the way, pouting and——

ELOISE [*stung*]. "Pouting!"

LOUIS. And when that stranger came posting after us, so obvious a spy——

ELOISE [*scornfully*]. Pooh! He is nothing.

LOUIS. Is there a league between here and Paris over which he has not dogged us? By diligence, on horseback, on foot, turning up at every posting-house, every roadside inn, the while you laughed at me because I read death in his face! These two days we have been here, is there an hour when you could look from that window except to see him grinning up from the wine-shop door down there?

ELOISE [*impatiently, but with a somewhat conscious expression*]. I tell you not to fear him. There is nothing in it.

LOUIS [*looking at her keenly*]. Be sure I understand why you do not think him a spy! You believe he has followed us because you——

ELOISE. I expected that! Oh, I knew it would come! [*Furiously.*] I never saw the man before in my life!

LOUIS [*pacing the floor*]. He is unmistakable; his trade is stamped on him; a hired trailer of your precious "Nation's."

ELOISE [*haughtily*]. The Nation is the People. You malign because you fear. The People is sacred!

LOUIS [*with increasing bitterness*]. Aren't you tired yet of the Palais Royal platitudes? I have been patient with your Mericourtisms for so long. Yes, always I was patient. Always there was time; there was danger, but there was a little time. [*He faces her, his voice becoming louder, his gestures more vehement.*] But now the *Jeune Pierrette* sails

this hour, and if we are not out of here and on her deck when she leaves the quay, my head rolls in Samson's basket within the week, with Anne's and your own to follow! *Now*, I tell you, there is no more time, and *now*——

ELOISE [*suavely*]. Yes? Well? "Now?" [*He checks himself; his lifted hand falls to his side.*]

LOUIS [*in a gentle voice*]. I am still patient. [*He looks into her eyes, makes her a low and formal obeisance, and drops dejectedly into the chair at the desk.*]

ELOISE [*dangerously*]. Is the oration concluded?

LOUIS. Quite.

ELOISE [*suddenly volcanic*]. Then "*now*" you'll perhaps be "patient" enough to explain why I shouldn't leave you instantly. Understand fully that I have come thus far with you and Anne solely to protect you in case you were suspected. "*Now*," my little man, you are safe: you have only to go on board your vessel. Why should I go with you? Why do you insist on dragging me out of the country?

LOUIS [*wearily*]. Only to save your life; that is all.

ELOISE. My life! Tut! My life is safe with the People—my People! [*She draws herself up magnificently.*] The Nation would protect me! I gave the people my whole fortune when they were starving. After that, who in France dare lay a finger upon the Citizeness Eloise d'Anville!

LOUIS. I have the idea sometimes, my cousin, that perhaps if you had not given them your prop-

erty they would have taken it anyway. [*Dryly.*] They did mine.

ELOISE [*agitated*]. I do not expect you to comprehend what I felt—what I feel! [*She lifts her arms longingly.*] Oh, for a Man!—a Man who could understand me!

LOUIS [*sadly*]. That excludes me!

ELOISE. Shall I spell it?

LOUIS. You are right. So far from understanding you, I understand nothing. The age is too modern for me. I do not understand why this rabble is permitted to rule France; I do not even understand why it is permitted to live.

ELOISE [*with superiority*]. Because you belong to the class that thought itself made of porcelain and the rest of the world clay. It is simple: the mud-ball breaks the vase.

LOUIS. You belong to the same class, even to the same family.

ELOISE. You are wrong. One circumstance proves me no aristocrat.

LOUIS. What circumstance?

ELOISE. That I happened to be born with brains. I can account for it only by supposing some hushed-up ancestral scandal. [*Brusquely.*] Do you understand that?

LOUIS. I overlook it. [*He writes again.*]

ELOISE. Quibbling was always a habit of yours. [*Snapping at him irritably.*] Oh, stop that writing! You can't do it, and you don't need it. You blame the people because they turn on you now,

after you've whipped and beaten and ground them underfoot for centuries and centuries and——

LOUIS. Quite a career for a man of twenty-nine!

ELOISE. I have said that quibbling was——

LOUIS [*despondently*]. Perhaps it is. To return to my other deficiencies, I do not understand why this spy who followed us from Paris has not arrested me long before now. I do not understand why you hate me. I do not understand the world in general. And in particular I do not understand the art of forgery. [*He throws down his pen.*]

ELOISE. You talk of "patience"! How often have I explained that you would not need passports of any kind if you would let me throw off my incognito. If any one questions you, it will be sufficient if I give my name. All France knows the Citizeness Eloise d'Anville. Do you suppose the officer on the quay would dare oppose——

LOUIS [*with a gesture of resignation*]. I know you think it.

ELOISE [*angrily*]. You tempt me not to prove it. But for Anne's sake——

LOUIS. Not for mine. That, at least, I understand. [*He rises.*] My dear cousin, I am going to be very serious——

ELOISE. O heavens! [*She flings away from him.*]

LOUIS [*plaintively*]. I shall not make another oration——

ELOISE. Make anything you choose. [*Drumming the floor with her foot.*] What does it matter?

LOUIS. I have a presentiment—I ask you to listen——

ELOISE [*in her irritation almost screaming*]. How can I *help* but listen? And Anne, too! [*With a short laugh.*] You know as well as I do that when that door is open everything you say in this room is heard in there. [*She points to the open doorway, where* MADAME DE LASEYNE *instantly makes her appearance, and after exchanging one fiery glance with* ELOISE *as swiftly withdraws, closing the door behind her with outraged emphasis.*]

ELOISE [*breaking into a laugh*]. Forward, soldiers!

LOUIS [*reprovingly*]. Eloise!

ELOISE. Well, *open* the door, then, if you want her to hear you make love to me! [*Coolly.*] That's what you're going to do, isn't it?

LOUIS [*with imperfect self-control*]. I wish to ask you for the last time——

ELOISE [*flouting*]. There are so many last times!

LOUIS. To ask you if you are sure that you know your own heart. You cared for me once, and——

ELOISE [*as if this were news indeed*]. I did? Who under heaven ever told you that?

LOUIS [*flushing*]. You allowed yourself to be betrothed to me, I believe.

ELOISE. "Allowed" is the word, precisely. I seem to recall changing all that the very day I became an orphan—and my own master! [*Satirically polite.*] Pray correct me if my memory errs. How long ago was it? Six years? Seven?

LOUIS [*with emotion*]. Eloise, Eloise, you did love me then! We were happy, both of us, so very happy——

ELOISE [*sourly*]. "Both!" My faith! But I must have been a brave little actress.

LOUIS. I do not believe it. You loved me. I—— [*He hesitates.*]

ELOISE. Do get on with what you have to say.

LOUIS [*in a low voice*]. I have many forebodings, Eloise, but the strongest—and for me the saddest—is that this is the last chance you will ever have to tell—to tell me—— [*He falters again.*]

ELOISE [*irritated beyond measure, shouting*]. To tell you *what?*

LOUIS [*swallowing*]. That your love for me still lingers.

ELOISE [*promptly*]. Well, it doesn't. So *that's* over!

LOUIS. Not quite yet. I——

ELOISE [*dropping into a chair*]. O Death!

LOUIS [*still gently*]. Listen. I have hope that you and Anne may be permitted to escape; but as for me, since the first moment I felt the eyes of that spy from Paris upon me I have had the premonition that I would be taken back—to the guillotine, Eloise. I am sure that he will arrest me when I attempt to leave this place to-night. [*With sorrowful earnestness.*] And it is with the certainty in my soul that this is our last hour together that I ask you if you cannot tell me that the old love has come back. Is there nothing in your heart for me?

ELOISE. Was there anything in *your* heart for the beggar who stood at your door in the old days?

LOUIS. Is there nothing for him who stands at yours now, begging for a word?

ELOISE [*frowning*]. I remember you had the name of a disciplinarian in your regiment. [*She rises to face him.*] Did you ever find anything in your heart for the soldiers you ordered tied up and flogged? Was there anything in your heart for the peasants who starved in your fields?

LOUIS [*quietly*]. No; it was too full of you.

ELOISE. Words! Pretty little words!

LOUIS. Thoughts. Pretty, because they are of you. All, always of you—always, my dear. I never really think of anything but you. The picture of you is always before the eyes of my soul; the very name of you is forever in my heart. [*With a rueful smile.*] And it is on the tips of my fingers, sometimes when it shouldn't be. See. [*He steps to the desk and shows her a scribbled sheet.*] This is what I laughed at a while ago. I tried to write, with you near me, and unconsciously I let your name creep into my very forgery! I wrote it as I wrote it in the sand when we were children; as I have traced it a thousand times on coated mirrors —on frosted windows. [*He reads the writing aloud.*] "Permit the Citizen Balsage, and his second sister, the Citizeness Marie Balsage, and Eloise d'Anville"—so I wrote!—"to embark upon the vessel *Jeune Pierrette*——" You see? [*He lets the paper fall upon the desk.*] Even in this danger, that I feel

closer and closer with every passing second, your name came in of itself. I am like that English Mary: if they will open my heart when I am dead, they shall find, not "Calais," but "Eloise"!

ELOISE [*going to the dressing-table*]. Louis, that doesn't interest me. [*She adds a delicate touch or two to her hair, studying it thoughtfully in the dressing-table mirror.*]

LOUIS [*somberly*]. I told you long ago——

ELOISE [*smiling at her reflection*]. So you did—often!

LOUIS [*breathing quickly*]. I have nothing new to offer. I understand. I bore you.

ELOISE. Louis, to be frank: I don't care what they find in your heart when they open it.

LOUIS [*with a hint of sternness*]. Have you never reflected that there might be something for me to forgive you?

ELOISE [*glancing at him over her shoulder in frowning surprise*]. What!

LOUIS. I wonder sometimes if you have ever found a flaw in your own character.

ELOISE [*astounded*]. So! [*Turning sharply upon him.*] You are assuming the right to criticize me, are you? Oho!

LOUIS [*agitated*]. I state merely—I have said—I think I forgive you a great deal ——

ELOISE [*beginning to char*]. You do! You bestow your gracious pardon upon me, do you? [*Bursting into flame.*] Keep your forgiveness to yourself! When I want it I'll kneel at your feet

and beg it of you! You can *kiss* me then, for then you will know that "the old love has come back"!

LOUIS [*miserably*]. When you kneel——

ELOISE. Can you picture it—*Marquis?* [*She hurls his title at him, and draws herself up in icy splendor.*] I am a woman of the Republic!

LOUIS. And the Republic has no need of love.

ELOISE. Its daughter has no need of yours!

LOUIS. Until you kneel to me. You have spoken. It is ended. [*Turning from her with a pathetic gesture of farewell and resignation, his attention is suddenly arrested by something invisible. He stands for a moment transfixed. When he speaks, it is in an altered tone, light and at the same time ominous.*] My cousin, suffer the final petition of a bore. Forgive my seriousness; forgive my stupidity, for I believe that what one hears now means that a number of things are indeed ended. Myself among them.

ELOISE [*not comprehending*]. "What one hears?"

LOUIS [*slowly*]. In the distance. [*Both stand motionless to listen, and the room is silent. Gradually a muffled, multitudinous sound, at first very faint, becomes audible.*]

ELOISE. What is it?

LOUIS [*with pale composure*]. Only a song! [*The distant sound becomes distinguishable as a singing from many unmusical throats and pitched in every key, a drum-beat booming underneath; a tumultuous rumble which grows slowly louder. The door of the inner room opens, and* MADAME DE LASEYNE *enters.*]

ANNE [*briskly, as she comes in*]. I have hidden the cloak and the dress beneath the mattress. Have you——

LOUIS [*lifting his hand*]. Listen! [*She halts, startled. The singing, the drums, and the tumult swell suddenly much louder, as if the noise-makers had turned a corner.*]

ANNE [*crying out*]. The "Marseillaise"!

LOUIS. The "Vultures' Chorus"!

ELOISE [*in a ringing voice.*] The Hymn of Liberty!

ANNE [*trembling violently*]. It grows louder.

LOUIS. *Nearer!*

ELOISE [*running to the window*]. They are coming this way!

ANNE [*rushing ahead of her*]. They have turned the corner of the street. Keep back, Louis!

ELOISE [*leaning out of the window, enthusiastically*]. *Vive la*—— [*She finishes with an indignant gurgle as* ANNE DE LASEYNE, *without comment, claps a prompt hand over her mouth and pushes her vigorously from the window.*]

ANNE. A mob—carrying torches and dancing. [*Her voice shaking wildly.*] They are following a troop of soldiers.

LOUIS. The National Guard.

ANNE. Keep back from the window! A man in a tricolor scarf marching in front.

LOUIS. A political, then—an official of their government.

ANNE. O Virgin, have mercy! [*She turns a stricken face upon her brother.*] It is that——

LOUIS [*biting his nails*]. Of course. Our spy. [*He takes a hesitating step toward the desk; but swings about, goes to the door at the rear, shoots the bolt back and forth, apparently unable to decide upon a course of action; finally leaves the door bolted and examines the hinges.* ANNE, *meanwhile, has hurried to the desk, and seizing a candle there, begins to light others in a candelabrum on the dressing-table. The noise outside grows to an uproar; the "Marseillaise" changes to "Ça ira"; and a shaft of the glare from the torches below shoots through the window and becomes a staggering red patch on the ceiling.*]

ANNE [*feverishly*]. Lights! Light those candles in the sconce, Eloise! Light all the candles we have. [ELOISE, *resentful, does not move.*]

LOUIS. No, no! Put them out!

ANNE. Oh, fatal! [*She stops him as he rushes to obey his own command.*] If our window is lighted he will believe we have no thought of leaving, and pass by. [*She hastily lights the candles in a sconce upon the wall as she speaks; the shabby place is now brightly illuminated.*]

LOUIS. He will not pass by. [*The external tumult culminates in riotous yelling, as, with a final roll, the drums cease to beat.* MADAME DE LASEYNE *runs again to the window.*]

ELOISE [*sullenly*]. You are disturbing yourselves without reason. They will not stop here.

ANNE [*in a sickly whisper*]. They *have* stopped.

LOUIS. At the door of this house? [MADAME DE LASEYNE, *leaning against the wall, is unable to reply, save by a gesture. The noise from the street*

dwindles to a confused, expectant murmur. LOUIS *takes a pistol from beneath his blouse, strides to the door, and listens.*]

ANNE [*faintly*]. He is in the house. The soldiers followed him.

LOUIS. They are on the lower stairs. [*He turns to the two women humbly.*] My sister and my cousin, my poor plans have only made everything worse for you. I cannot ask you to forgive me. We are caught.

ANNE [*vitalized with the energy of desperation*]. Not till the very last shred of hope is gone. [*She springs to the desk and begins to tear the discarded sheets into minute fragments.*] Is that door fastened?

LOUIS. They'll break it down, of course.

ANNE. Where is our passport from Paris?

LOUIS. Here. [*He gives it to her.*]

ANNE. Quick! Which of these "permits" is the best?

LOUIS. They're all hopeless—— [*He fumbles among the sheets on the desk.*]

ANNE. Any of them. We can't stop to select. [*She thrusts the passport and a haphazard sheet from the desk into the bosom of her dress. An orderly tramping of heavy shoes and a clinking of metal become audible as the soldiers ascend the upper flight of stairs.*]

ELOISE. All this is childish. [*Haughtily.*] I shall merely announce——

ANNE [*uttering a half-choked scream of rage*]. You'll announce nothing! Out of here, both of you!

LOUIS. No, no!

ANNE [*with breathless rapidity, as the noise on the stairs grows louder*]. Let them break the door in if they will; only let them find me alone. [*She seizes her brother's arm imploringly as he pauses, uncertain.*] Give me the chance to make them think I am here alone.

LOUIS. I can't——

ANNE [*urging him to the inner door*]. Is there any other possible hope for us? Is there any other possible way to gain even a little time? Louis, I want your word of honor not to leave that room unless I summon you. I must have it! [*Overborne by her intensity,* LOUIS *nods despairingly, allowing her to force him toward the other room. The tramping of the soldiers, much louder and very close, comes to a sudden stop. There is a sharp word of command, and a dozen muskets ring on the floor just beyond the outer door.*]

ELOISE [*folding her arms*]. You needn't think I shall consent to hide myself. I shall tell them——

ANNE [*in a surcharged whisper*]. You will *not* ruin us! [*With furious determination, as a loud knock falls upon the door.*] In *there,* I tell you! [*Almost physically she sweeps both* ELOISE *and* LOUIS *out of the room, closes the door upon them, and leans against it, panting. The knocking is repeated. She braces herself to speak.*]

ANNE [*with a catch in her throat*]. Who is—there?

A SONOROUS VOICE. French Republic!

ANNE [*faltering*]. It is—it is difficult to hear. What do you——

THE VOICE. Open the door.

ANNE [*more firmly*]. That is impossible.

THE VOICE. Open the door.

ANNE. What is your name?

THE VOICE. Valsin, National Agent.

ANNE. I do not know you.

THE VOICE. Open!

ANNE. I am here alone. I am dressing. I can admit no one.

THE VOICE. For the last time: open!

ANNE. No!

THE VOICE. Break it down. [*A thunder of blows from the butts of muskets falls upon the door.*]

ANNE [*rushing toward it in a passion of protest*]. No, no, no! You shall not come in! I tell you I have not finished dressing. If you are men of honor—— *Ah!* [*She recoils, gasping as a panel breaks in, the stock of a musket following it; and then, weakened at rusty bolt and crazy hinge, the whole door gives way and falls crashing into the room. The narrow passage thus revealed is crowded with shabbily uniformed soldiers of the National Guard, under an officer armed with a saber. As the door falls a man wearing a tricolor scarf strides by them, and, standing beneath the dismantled lintel, his hands behind him, sweeps the room with a smiling eye.*

This personage is handsomely, almost dandiacally dressed in black; his ruffle is of lace, his stockings are of silk; the lapels of his waistcoat, overlapping those of his long coat, exhibit a rich embroidery of white and crimson. These and other details of elegance, such as his wearing powder upon his dark hair, indi-

cate either insane daring or an importance quite overwhelming. A certain easy power in his unusually brilliant eyes favors the probability that, like Robespierre, he can wear what he pleases. Undeniably he has distinction. Equally undeniable is something in his air that is dapper and impish and lurking. His first glance over the room apparently affording him acute satisfaction, he steps lightly across the prostrate door, MADAME DE LASEYNE *retreating before him but keeping herself between him and the inner door. He comes to an unexpected halt in a dancing-master's posture, removing his huge hat—which displays a tricolor plume of ostrich feathers—with a wide flourish, an intentional burlesque of the old-court manner.*]

VALSIN. Permit me. [*He bows elaborately.*] Be gracious to a recent fellow-traveler. I introduce myself. At your service: Valsin, Agent of the National Committee of Public Safety. [*He faces about sharply.*] Soldiers! [*They stand at attention.*] To the street door. I will conduct the examination alone. My assistant will wait on this floor, at the top of the stair. Send the people away down below there, officer. Look to the courtyard. Clear the streets. [*The officer salutes, gives a word of command, and the soldiers shoulder their muskets, march off, and are heard clanking down the stairs.* VALSIN *tosses his hat upon the desk, and turns smilingly to the trembling but determined* MADAME DE LASEYNE.]

ANNE [*summoning her indignation*]. How dare you break down my door! How dare you force your——

VALSIN [*suavely*]. My compliments on the celerity with which the citizeness has completed her toilet. Marvelous. An example to her sex.

ANNE. You intend robbery, I suppose.

VALSIN [*with a curt laugh*]. Not precisely.

ANNE. What, then?

VALSIN. I have come principally for the returned Emigrant, Louis Valny-Cherault, formerly called Marquis de Valny-Cherault, formerly of the former regiment of Valny; also formerly——

ANNE [*cutting him off sharply*]. I do not know what you mean by all these names—and "formerlies"!

VALSIN. No? [*Persuasively.*] Citizeness, pray assert that I did not encounter you last week on your journey from Paris——

ANNE [*hastily*]. It is true I have been to Paris on business; you may have seen me—I do not know. Is it a crime to return from Paris?

VALSIN [*in a tone of mock encouragement*]. It will amuse me to hear you declare that I did not see you traveling in company with Louis Valny-Cherault. Come! Say it.

ANNE [*stepping back defensively, closer to the inner door*]. I am alone, I tell you! I do not know what you mean. If you saw me speaking with people in the diligence, or at some posting-house, they were only traveling acquaintances. I did not know them. I am a widow——

VALSIN. My condolences. Poor, of course?

ANNE. Yes.

VALSIN. And lonely, of course? [*Apologetically.*] Loneliness is in the formula: I suggest it for fear you might forget.

ANNE [*doggedly*]. I am alone.

VALSIN. Quite right.

ANNE [*confusedly*]. I am a widow, I tell you—a widow, living here quietly with——

VALSIN [*taking her up quickly*]. Ah—"*with*"! Living here alone, and also "with"—whom? Not your late husband?

ANNE [*desperately*]. With my niece.

VALSIN [*affecting great surprise*]. Ah! A niece! And the niece, I take it, is in your other room yonder?

VALSIN [*taking a step forward*]. Is she pretty? [ANNE *places her back against the closed door, facing him grimly. He assumes a tone of indulgence.*] Ah, one must not look: the niece, likewise, has not completed her toilet.

ANNE. She is—asleep.

VALSIN [*glancing toward the dismantled doorway*]. A sound napper! Why did you not say instead that she was—shaving? [*He advances, smiling.*]

ANNE [*between her teeth*]. You shall not go in! You cannot see her! She is——

VALSIN [*laughing*]. Allow me to prompt you. She is not only asleep; she is ill. She is starving. Also, I cannot go in because she is an orphan. Surely, she is an orphan? A lonely widow and her lonely orphan niece. Ah, touching—and sweet!

ANNE [*hotly*]. What authority have you to force your way into my apartment and insult——

VALSIN [*touching his scarf*]. I had the honor to mention the French Republic.

ANNE. So! Does the French Republic persecute widows and orphans?

VALSIN [*gravely*]. No. It is the making of them!

ANNE [*crying out*]. Ah, horrible!

VALSIN. I regret that its just severity was the cause of your own bereavement, Citizeness. When your unfortunate husband, André, formerly known as the Prince de Laseyne——

ANNE [*defiantly, though tears have sprung to her eyes*]. I tell you I do not know what you mean by these titles. My name is Balsage.

VALSIN. Bravo! The Widow Balsage, living here in calm obscurity with her niece. Widow Balsage, answer quickly, without stopping to think. [*Sharply.*] How long have you lived here?

ANNE. Two months. [*Faltering.*]—A year!

VALSIN [*laughing*]. Good. Two months and a year! No visitors? No strangers?

ANNE. No.

VALSIN [*wheeling quickly and picking up* LOUIS'S *cap from the dressing-table*]. This cap, then, belongs to your niece.

ANNE [*flustered, advancing toward him as if to take it*]. It was—it was left here this afternoon by our landlord.

VALSIN [*musingly*]. That is very, very puzzling. [*He leans against the dressing-table in a careless attitude, his back to her.*]

ANNE [*cavalierly*]. Why "puzzling"?

VALSIN. Because I sent him on an errand to Paris this morning. [*She flinches, but he does not turn to look at her, continuing in a tone of idle curiosity.*] I suppose your own excursion to Paris was quite an event for you, Widow Balsage. You do not take many journeys?

ANNE. I am too poor.

VALSIN. And you have not been contemplating another departure from Boulogne?

ANNE. No.

VALSIN [*still in the same careless attitude, his back toward her and the closed door*]. Good. It is as I thought: the portmanteau is for ornament.

ANNE [*choking*]. It belongs to my niece. She came only an hour ago. She has not unpacked.

VALSIN. Naturally. Too ill.

ANNE. She had traveled all night; she was exhausted. She went to sleep at once.

VALSIN. Is she a somnambulist?

ANNE [*taken aback*]. Why?

VALSIN [*indifferently*]. She has just opened the door of her room in order to overhear our conversation. [*Waving his hand to the dressing-table mirror, in which he had been gazing.*] Observe it, Citizeness Laseyne.

ANNE [*demoralized*]. I do not—I——[*Stamping her foot.*] How often shall I tell you my name is Balsage!

VALSIN [*turning to her apologetically*]. My wretched memory. Perhaps I might remember better if I saw it written: I beg a glance at your papers. Doubtless you have your certificate of citizenship——

ANNE [*trembling*]. I have papers, certainly.

VALSIN. The sight of them——

ANNE. I have my passport; you shall see. [*With wildly shaking hands she takes from her blouse the passport and the "permit," crumpled together.*] It is in proper form—— [*She is nervously replacing the two papers in her bosom when with a sudden movement he takes them from her. She cries out incoherently, and attempts to recapture them.*]

VALSIN [*extending his left arm to fend her off*]. Yes, here you have your passport. And there you have others. [*He points to the littered floor under the desk.*] Many of them!

ANNE. Old letters! [*She clutches at the papers in his grasp.*]

VALSIN [*easily fending her off*]. Doubtless! [*He shakes the "permit" open.*] Oho! A permission to embark—and signed by three names of the highest celebrity. Alas, these unfortunate statesmen, Billaud-Varenne, Carnot, and Robespierre! Each has lately suffered an injury to his right hand. What a misfortune for France! And what a coincidence! One has not heard the like since we closed the theaters.

ANNE [*furiously struggling to reach his hand*]. Give me my papers! Give me——

VALSIN [*holding them away from her*]. You see, these unlucky great men had their names signed for them by somebody else. And I should judge that this somebody else must have been writing quite recently—less than half an hour

ago, from the freshness of the ink—and in considerable haste; perhaps suffering considerable anguish of mind, Widow Balsage! [MADAME DE LASEYNE, *overwhelmed, sinks into a chair. He comes closer to her, his manner changing startlingly.*]

VALSIN [*bending over with sudden menace, his voice loud and harsh*]. Widow Balsage, if you intend no journey, why have you this forged permission to embark on the *Jeune Pierrette*? Widow Balsage, *who* is the Citizen Balsage?

ANNE [*faintly*]. My brother.

VALSIN [*straightening up*]. Your first truth. [*Resuming his gaiety.*] Of course he is not in that room yonder with your niece.

ANNE [*brokenly*]. No, no, no; he is not! He is not here.

VALSIN [*commiseratingly*]. Poor woman! You have not even the pleasure to perceive how droll you are.

ANNE. I perceive that I am a fool! [*She dashes the tears from her eyes and springs to her feet.*] I also perceive that you have denounced us before the authorities here——

VALSIN. Pardon. In Boulogne it happens that I am the authority. I introduce myself for the third time: Valsin, Commissioner of the National Committee of Public Safety. Tallien was sent to Bordeaux; Collot to Lyons, I to Boulogne. Citizeness, were all of the august names on your permission genuine, you could no more leave this port without my counter-signature than you could take wing and fly over the Channel!

ANNE [*with a shrill laugh of triumph*]. You have overreached yourself! You're an ordinary spy: you followed us from Paris——

VALSIN [*gaily*]. Oh, I intended you to notice that!

ANNE [*unheeding*]. You have claimed to be Commissioner of the highest power in France. We can prove that you are a common spy. You may go to the guillotine for that. Take care, Citizen! So! You have denounced us; we denounce you. I'll have you arrested by your own soldiers. I'll call them—— [*She makes a feint of running to the window. He watches her coolly, in silence; and she halts, chagrined.*]

VALSIN [*pleasantly*]. I was sure you would not force me to be premature. Remark it, Citizeness Laseyne: I am enjoying all this. I have waited a long time for it.

ANNE [*becoming hysterical*]. I am the Widow Balsage, I tell you! You do not know us—you followed us from Paris. [*Half-sobbing.*] You're a spy—a hanger-on of the police. We will prove——

VALSIN [*stepping to the dismantled doorway*]. I left my assistant within hearing—a species of animal of mine. I may claim that he belongs to me. A worthy patriot, but skillful, who has had the honor of a slight acquaintance with you, I believe. [*Calling.*] Dossonville! [DOSSONVILLE, a *large man, flabby of flesh, loose-mouthed, grizzled, carelessly dressed, makes his appearance in the doorway. He has a harsh and reckless eye; and, obviously a flamboyant bully by temperament, his abject,*

doggish deference to VALSIN *is instantly impressive, more than confirming the latter's remark that* DOSSONVILLE *"belongs" to him.* DOSSONVILLE, *apparently, is a chattel indeed, body and soul. At sight of him* MADAME DE LASEYNE *catches at the desk for support and stands speechless.*]

VALSIN [*easily*]. Dossonville, you may inform the Citizeness Laseyne what office I have the fortune to hold.

DOSSONVILLE [*coming in*]. Bright heaven! All the world knows that you are the representative of the Committee of Public Safety. Commissioner to Boulogne.

VALSIN. With what authority?

DOSSONVILLE. Absolute—unlimited! Naturally. What else would be useful?

VALSIN. You recall this woman, Dossonville?

DOSSONVILLE. She was present when I delivered the passport to the Emigrant Valny-Cherault, in Paris.

VALSIN. Did you forge that passport?

DOSSONVILLE No. I told the Emigrant I had. Under orders. [*Grinning.*] It was genuine.

VALSIN. Where did you get it?

DOSSONVILLE. From you.

VALSIN [*suavely*]. Sit down, Dossonville. [*The latter, who is standing by a chair, obeys with a promptness more than military.* VALSIN *turns smilingly to* MADAME DE LASEYNE.] Dossonville's instructions, however, did not include a "permit" to sail on the *Jeune Pierrette.* All of which, I confess, Citizeness, has very much the appearance

of a trap! [*He tosses the two papers upon the desk. Utterly dismayed she makes no effort to secure them. He regards her with quizzical enjoyment.*]

ANNE. Ah—you—— [*She fails to speak coherently.*]

VALSIN. Dossonville has done very well. He procured your passport, brought your "disguises," planned your journey, even gave you directions how to find these lodgings in Boulogne. Indeed, I instructed him to omit nothing for your comfort. [*He pauses for a moment.*] If I am a spy, Citizeness Laseyne, at least I trust your gracious intelligence may not cling to the epithet "ordinary." My soul! but I appear to myself a most uncommon type of spy—a very intricate, complete, and unusual spy, in fact.

ANNE [*to herself, weeping*]. Ah, poor Louis!

VALSIN [*cheerfully*]. You are beginning to comprehend? That is well. Your niece's door is still ajar by the discreet width of a finger, so I assume that the Emigrant also begins to comprehend. Therefore I take my ease! [*He seats himself in the most comfortable chair in the room, crossing his legs in a leisurely attitude, and lightly drumming the tips of his fingers together, the while his peaceful gaze is fixed upon the ceiling. His tone, as he continues, is casual.*] You understand, my Dossonville, having long ago occupied this very apartment myself, I am serenely aware that the Emigrant can leave the other room only by the window; and as this is the fourth floor, and a proper number of bayonets in the courtyard below

are arranged to receive any person active enough to descend by a rope of bedclothes, one is confident that the said Emigrant will remain where he is. Let us make ourselves comfortable, for it is a delightful hour—an hour I have long promised myself. I am in a good humor. Let us all be happy. Citizeness Laseyne, enjoy yourself. Call me some bad names!

ANNE [*between her teeth*]. If I could find one evil enough!

VALSIN [*slapping his knee delightedly*]. There it is: the complete incompetence of your class. You poor aristocrats, you do not even know how to swear. Your ancestors knew how! They were fighters; they knew how to swear because they knew how to attack; you poor moderns have no profanity left in you, because, poisoned by idleness, you have forgotten even how to resist. And yet you thought yourselves on top, and so you were —but as foam is on top of the wave. You forgot that power, like genius, always comes from underneath, because it is produced only by turmoil. We have had to wring the neck of your featherhead court, because while the court was the nation the nation had its pockets picked. You were at the mercy of anybody with a pinch of brains: adventurers like Mazarin, like Fouquet, like Law, or that little commoner, the woman Fish, who called herself Pompadour and took France—France, merely!—from your King, and used it to her own pleasure. Then, at last, after the swindlers had well plucked you—at last, unfortunate creatures,

the People got you! Citizeness, the People had starved: be assured they will eat you to the bone—and then eat the bone! You are helpless because you have learned nothing and forgotten everything. You have forgotten everything in this world except how to be fat!

DOSSONVILLE [*applauding with unction*]. Beautiful! It is beautiful, all that! A beautiful speech!

VALSIN. Ass!

DOSSONVILLE [*meekly*]. Perfectly, perfectly.

VALSIN [*crossly*]. That wasn't a speech; it was the truth. Citizeness Laseyne, so far as you are concerned, I am the People. [*He extends his hand negligently, with open palm.*] And I have got you. [*He clenches his fingers, like a cook's on the neck of a fowl.*] Like that. And I'm going to take you back to Paris, you and the Emigrant. [*She stands in an attitude eloquent of despair. His glance roves from her to the door of the other room, which is still slightly ajar; and, smiling at some fugitive thought, he continues, deliberately.*] I take you: you and your brother—and that rather pretty little person who traveled with you. [*There is a breathless exclamation from the other side of the door, which is flung open violently, as* ELOISE—*flushed, radiant with anger, and altogether magnificent—sweeps into the room to confront* VALSIN.]

ELOISE [*slamming the door behind her*]. Leave this Jack-in-Office to me, Anne!

DOSSONVILLE [*dazed by the vision*]. Lord! What glory! [*He rises, bowing profoundly, mutter-*

ing hoarsely.] Oh, eyes! Oh, hair! Look at her shape! Her chin! The divine——

VALSIN [*getting up and patting him reassuringly on the back*]. The lady perceives her effect, my Dossonville. It is no novelty. Sit down, my Dossonville. [*The still murmurous* DOSSONVILLE *obeys.* VALSIN *turns to* ELOISE, *a brilliant light in his eyes.*] Let me greet one of the nieces of Widow Balsage—evidently not the sleepy one, and certainly not ill. Health so transcendent——

ELOISE [*placing her hand upon* MADAME DE LASEYNE'S *shoulder*]. This is a clown, Anne. You need have no fear of him whatever. His petty authority does not extend to us.

VALSIN [*deferentially*]. Will the niece of Widow Balsage explain why it does not?

ELOISE [*turning upon him fiercely*]. Because the patriot Citizeness Eloise d'Anville is here!

VALSIN [*assuming an air of thoughtfulness*]. Yes, she is here. That "permit" yonder even mentions her by name. It is curious. I shall have to go into that. Continue, niece.

ELOISE [*with supreme haughtiness*]. This lady is under her protection.

VALSIN [*growing red*]. Pardon. Under whose protection?

ELOISE [*sulphurously*]. Under the protection of Eloise d'Anville! [*This has a frightful effect upon* VALSIN; *his face becomes contorted; he clutches at his throat, apparently half strangled, staggers, and falls choking into the easy-chair he has formerly occupied.*]

VALSIN [*gasping, coughing, incoherent*]. Under the pro—the protection—— [*He explodes into peal after peal of uproarious laughter.*] The protection of—— Aha, ha, ha, ho, ho, ho! [*He rocks himself back and forth unappeasably.*]

ELOISE [*with a slight lift of the eyebrows*]. This man is an idiot.

VALSIN [*during an abatement of his attack*]. Oh, pardon! It is—too—much—too much for me! You say—these people are——

ELOISE [*stamping her foot.*] Under the protection of Eloise d'Anville, imbecile! You cannot touch them. She wills it! [*At this,* VALSIN *shouts as if pleading for mercy, and beats the air with his hands. He struggles to his feet and, pounding himself upon the chest, walks to and fro in the effort to control his convulsion.*]

ELOISE [*to* ANNE, *under cover of the noise he makes*]. I was wrong: he is not an idiot.

ANNE [*despairingly*]. He laughs at you.

ELOISE [*in a quick whisper*]. Out of bluster; because he is afraid. He is badly frightened. I know just what to do. Go into the other room with Louis.

ANNE [*protesting weakly*]. I can't hope——

ELOISE [*flashing from a cloud*]. *You* failed, didn't you? [MADAME DE LASEYNE, *after a tearful perusal of the stern resourcefulness now written in the younger woman's eyes, succumbs with a piteous gesture of assent and goes out forlornly.* ELOISE *closes the door and stands with her back to it.*]

VALSIN [*paying no attention to them*]. Eloise d'Anville! [*Still pacing the room in the struggle to*

subdue his hilarity.] This young citizeness speaks of the protection of Eloise d'Anville! [*Leaning feebly upon* DOSSONVILLE'S *shoulder.*] Do you hear, my Dossonville? It is an ecstasy. Ecstasize, then. Scream, Dossonville!

DOSSONVILLE [*puzzled but evidently accustomed to being so, cackles instantly*]. Perfectly. Ha, ha! The citizeness is not only stirringly beautiful, she is also——

VALSIN. She is also a wit. Susceptible henchman, concentrate your thoughts upon domesticity. In this presence remember your wife!

ELOISE [*peremptorily*]. Dismiss that person. I have something to say to you.

VALSIN [*wiping his eyes*]. Dossonville, you are not required. We are going to be sentimental, and heaven knows you are not the moon. In fact, you are a fat old man. Exit, obesity! Go somewhere and think about your children. Flit, whale!

DOSSONVILLE [*rising*]. Perfectly, my chieftain. [*He goes to the broken door.*]

ELOISE [*tapping the floor with her shoe*]. Out of hearing!

VALSIN. The floor below.

DOSSONVILLE. Well understood. Perfectly, perfectly! [*He goes out through the hallway; disappears, chuckling grossly. There are some moments of silence within the room, while he is heard clumping down a flight of stairs; then* VALSIN *turns to* ELOISE *with burlesque ardor.*]

VALSIN. "Alone at last!"

ELOISE [*maintaining her composure*]. Rabbit!

VALSIN [*dropping into the chair at the desk, with mock dejection*]. Repulsed at the outset! Ah, Citizeness, there were moments on the journey from Paris when I thought I detected a certain kindness in your glances at the lonely stranger.

ELOISE [*folding her arms*]. You are to withdraw your soldiers, countersign the "permit," and allow my friends to embark at once.

VALSIN [*with solemnity*]. Do you give it as an order, Citizeness?

ELOISE. I do. You will receive suitable political advancement.

VALSIN [*in a choked voice*]. You mean as a—a reward?

ELOISE [*haughtily*]. *I* guarantee that you shall receive it! [*He looks at her strangely; then, with a low moan, presses his hand to his side, seeming upon the point of a dangerous seizure.*]

VALSIN [*managing to speak*]. I can only beg you to spare me. You have me at your mercy.

ELOISE [*swelling*]. It is well for you that you understand that!

VALSIN [*shaking his head ruefully*]. Yes; you see I have a bad liver: it may become permanently enlarged. Laughter is my great danger.

ELOISE [*crying out with rage*]. *Oh!*

VALSIN [*dolorously*]. I have continually to remind myself that I am no longer in the first flush of youth.

ELOISE. Idiot! Do you not know who I am!

VALSIN. You? Oh yes——[*He checks himself abruptly; looks at her with brief intensity; turns*

his eyes away, half closing them in quick meditation; smiles, as upon some secret pleasantry, and proceeds briskly.] Oh, yes, yes, I know who you are.

ELOISE [*beginning haughtily*]. Then you——

VALSIN [*at once cutting her off*]. As to your name, I do not say. Names at best are details; and your own is a detail that could hardly be thought to matter. *What* you are is obvious: you joined Louis and his sister in Paris at the barriers, and traveled with them as "Marie Balsage," a sister. You might save us a little trouble by giving us your real name; you will probably refuse, and the police will have to look it up when I take you back to Paris. Frankly you are of no importance to us, though of course we'll send you to the Tribunal. No doubt you are a poor relative of the Valny-Cherault, or, perhaps, you may have been a governess in the Laseyne family, or——

ELOISE [*under her breath*]. Idiot! Idiot!

VALSIN [*with subterranean enjoyment, watching her sidelong*]. Or the good-looking wife of some faithful retainer of the Emigrant's, perhaps.

ELOISE [*with a shrill laugh*]. Does the Committee of Public Safety betray the same intelligence in the appointment of *all* its agents? [*Violently*]. Imbecile, I——

VALSIN [*quickly raising his voice to check her*]. You are of no importance, I tell you! [*Changing his tone.*] Of course I mean politically. [*With broad gallantry.*] Otherwise, I am the first to admit extreme susceptibility. I saw that you ob-

served it on the way—at the taverns, in the diligence, at the posting-houses, at——

ELOISE [*with serenity*]. Yes. I am accustomed to oglers.

VALSIN. Alas, I believe you! My unfortunate sex is but too responsive.

ELOISE [*gasping*]. "Responsive"—— Oh!

VALSIN [*indulgently*]. Let us return to the safer subject. Presently I shall arrest those people in the other room and, regretfully, you, too. But first I pamper myself; I chat; I have an attractive woman to listen. In the matter of the arrest, I delay my fire; I do not flash in the pan, but I lengthen my fuse. Why? For the same reason that when I was a little boy and had something good to eat, I always first paid it the compliments of an epicure. I looked at it a long while. I played with it. Then I devoured it! I am still like that. And Louis yonder is good to eat, because I happen not to love him. However, I should mention that I doubt if he could recall either myself or the circumstance which annoyed me; some episodes are sometimes so little to certain people and so significant to certain other people. [*He smiles, stretching himself luxuriously in his chair.*] Behold me, Citizeness! I am explained. I am indulging my humor: I play with my cake. Let us see into what curious little figures I can twist it.

ELOISE. Idiot!

VALSIN [*pleasantly*]. I have lost count, but I

think that is the sixth idiot you have called me. Aha, it is only history, which one admires for repeating itself. Good! Let us march. I shall play—[*He picks up the "permit" from the desk, studies it absently, and looks whimsically at her over his shoulder, continuing:*] I shall play with—with all four of you.

ELOISE [*impulsively*]. Four?

VALSIN. I am not easy to deceive; there are four of you here.

ELOISE [*staring*]. So?

VALSIN. Louis brought you and his sister from Paris: a party of three. This "permit" which he forged is for four; the original three and the woman you mentioned a while ago, Eloise d'Anville. Hence she must have joined you here. The deduction is plain: there are three people in that room: the Emigrant, his sister, and this Eloise d'Anville. To the trained mind such reasoning is simple.

ELOISE [*elated*]. Perfectly!

VALSIN [*with an air of cunning*]. Nothing escapes me. You see that.

ELOISE. At first glance! I make you my most profound compliments. Sir, you are an eagle!

VALSIN [*smugly*]. Thanks. Now, then, pretty governess, you thought this d'Anville might be able to help you. What put that in your head?

ELOISE [*with severity*]. Do you pretend not to know what she is?

VALSIN. A heroine I have had the misfortune never to encounter. But I am informed of her character and history.

ELOISE [*sternly*]. Then you understand that even the Agent of the National Committee risks his head if he dares touch people she chooses to protect.

VALSIN [*extending his hand in plaintive appeal*]. Be generous to my opacity. How could *she* protect anybody?

ELOISE [*with condescension*]. She has earned the gratitude——

VALSIN. Of whom?

ELOISE [*superbly*]. Of the Nation!

VALSIN [*breaking out again*]. Ha, ha, ha! [*Clutching at his side.*] Pardon, oh, pardon, liver of mine. I must not die; my life is still useful.

ELOISE [*persisting stormily*]. Of the People, stupidity! Of the whole People, dolt! Of France, blockhead!

VALSIN [*with a violent effort, conquering his hilarity*]. There! I am saved. Let us be solemn, my child; it is better for my malady. You are still so young that one can instruct you that individuals are rarely grateful; "the People," never. What you call "the People" means folk who are not always sure of their next meal; therefore their great political and patriotic question is the cost of food. Their heroes are the champions who are going to make it cheaper; and when these champions fail them or cease to be useful to them, then they either forget these poor champions—or eat them. Let us hear what your Eloise d'Anville has done to earn the reward of being forgotten instead of eaten.

ELOISE [*her lips quivering*]. She surrendered her property voluntarily. She gave up all she owned to the Nation.

VALSIN [*genially*]. And immediately went to live with her relatives in great luxury.

ELOISE [*choking*]. The Republic will protect her. She gave her whole estate——

VALSIN. And the order for its confiscation was already written when she did it.

ELOISE [*passionately*]. Ah—*liar!*

VALSIN [*smiling*]. I have seen the order. [*She leans against the wall, breathing heavily. He goes on, smoothly.*] Yes, this martyr "gave" us her property; but one hears that she went to the opera just the same and wore more jewels than ever, and lived richly upon the Laseynes and Valny-Cheraults, until *they* were confiscated. Why, all the world knows about this woman; and let me tell you, to your credit, my governess, I think you have a charitable heart: you are the only person I ever heard speak kindly of her.

ELOISE [*setting her teeth*]. Venom!

VALSIN [*observing her slyly*]. It is with difficulty I am restraining my curiosity to see her—also to hear her!—when she learns of her proscription by a grateful Republic.

ELOISE [*with shrill mockery*]. Proscribed? Eloise d'Anville proscribed? Your inventions should be more plausible, Goodman Spy! I *knew* you were lying——

VALSIN [*smiling*]. You do not believe——

ELOISE [*proudly*]. Eloise d'Anville is a known Girondist. The Gironde is the real power in France.

VALSIN [*mildly*]. That party has fallen.

ELOISE [*with fire*]. Not far! It will revive.

VALSIN. Pardon, Citizeness, but you are behind the times, and they are very fast nowadays—the times. The Gironde is dead.

ELOISE [*ominously*]. It may survive *you*, my friend. Take care!

VALSIN [*unimpressed*]. The Gironde had a grand façade, and that was all. It was a party composed of amateurs and orators; and of course there were some noisy camp-followers and a few comic-opera vivandières, such as this d'Anville. In short, the Gironde looked enormous because it was hollow. It was like a pie that is all crust. We have tapped the crust—with a knife, Citizeness. There is nothing left.

ELOISE [*contemptuously*]. You say so. Nevertheless, the Rolands——

VALSIN [*gravely*]. Roland was found in a field yesterday; he had killed himself. His wife was guillotined the day after you left Paris. Every one of their political friends is proscribed.

ELOISE [*shaking as with bitter cold*]. It is a lie! Not Eloise d'Anville!

VALSIN [*rising*]. Would you like to see the warrant for her arrest? [*He takes a packet of documents from his breast pocket, selects one, and spreads it open before her.*] Let me read you her description:

"Eloise d'Anville, aristocrat. Figure, comely. Complexion, blond. Eyes, dark blue. Nose, straight. Mouth, wide——"

ELOISE [*in a burst of passion, striking the warrant a violent blow with her clenched fist*]. Let them dare! [*Beside herself, she strikes again, tearing the paper from his grasp. She stamps upon it.*] Let them dare, I say!

VALSIN [*picking up the warrant*]. Dare to say her mouth is wide?

ELOISE [*cyclonic*]. Dare to arrest her!

VALSIN. It does seem a pity. [*He folds the warrant slowly and replaces it in his pocket.*] Yes, a great pity. She was the one amusing thing in all this somberness. She will be missed. The Revolution will lack its joke.

ELOISE [*recoiling, her passion exhausted*]. Ah, infamy! [*She turns from him, covering her face with her hands.*]

VALSIN [*with a soothing gesture*]. Being only her friend, you speak mildly. The d'Anville herself would call it blasphemy.

ELOISE [*with difficulty*]. She is—so vain—then?

VALSIN [*lightly*]. Oh, a type—an actress.

ELOISE [*her back to him*]. How do you know? You said——

VALSIN. That I had not encountered her. [*Glibly.*] One knows best the people one has never seen. Intimacy confuses judgment. I confess to that amount of hatred for the former Marquis de Valny-Cherault that I take as great an interest in all that concerns him as if I loved

him. And the little d'Anville concerns him—yes, almost one would say, consumes him. The unfortunate man is said to be so blindly faithful that he can speak her name without laughing.

ELOISE [*stunned*]. Oh!

VALSIN [*going on, cheerily*]. No one else can do that, Citizeness. Jacobins, Cordeliers, Hébertists, even the shattered relics of the Gironde itself, all alike join in the colossal laughter at this Tricoteuse in Sèvres—this Jeanne d'Arc in rice-powder!

ELOISE [*tragically*]. They laugh—and proclaim her an outlaw!

VALSIN [*waving his hand carelessly*]. Oh, it is only that we are sweeping up the last remnants of aristocracy, and she goes with the rest—into the dust-heap. She should have remained a royalist; the final spectacle might have had dignity. As it is, she is not of her own class, not of ours: neither fish, flesh, nor—but yes, perhaps, after all, she is a fowl.

ELOISE [*brokenly*]. Alas! Homing—with wounded wing! [*She sinks into a chair with pathetic grace, her face in her hands.*]

VALSIN [*surreptitiously grinning*]. Not at all what I meant. [*Brutally.*] Peacocks don't fly.

ELOISE [*regaining her feet at a bound*]. You imitation dandy! You——

VALSIN [*with benevolence*]. My dear, your indignation for your friend is chivalrous. It is admirable; but she is not worth it. You do not understand her: you have probably seen her so much that you have never seen her as she is.

ELOISE [*witheringly*]. But you, august Zeus, having *never* seen her, will reveal her to me!

VALSIN [*smoothly urbane*]. If you have ears. You see, she is not altogether unique, but of a variety known to men who are wise enough to make a study of women.

ELOISE [*snapping out a short, loud laugh in his face*]. *Pouff!*

VALSIN [*unruffled*]. I profess myself an apprentice. The science itself is but in its infancy. Women themselves understand very well that they are to be classified, and they fear that we shall perceive it: they do not really wish to be known. Yet it is coming; some day our cyclopedists will have you sorted, classed, and defined with precision; but the d'Alembert of the future will not be a woman, because no woman so disloyal will ever be found. Men have to acquire loyalty to their sex: yours is an instinct. Citizen governess, I will give you a reading of the little d'Anville from this unwritten work. To begin——

ELOISE [*feverishly interested, but affecting languor*]. *Must* you?

VALSIN. To Eloise d'Anville the most interesting thing about a rose-bush has always been that Eloise d'Anville could smell it. Moonlight becomes important when it falls upon her face; sunset is worthy when she grows rosy in it. To her mind, the universe was set in motion to be the background for a decoration, and she is the decoration. She believes that the cathedral was built for the fresco. And when a dog interests her,

it is because he would look well beside her in a painting. Such dogs have no minds. I refer you to all the dogs in the portraits of Beauties.

ELOISE [*not at all displeased; pretending carelessness*]. Ah, you have heard that she is beautiful?

VALSIN. Far worse: that she is a Beauty. Let nothing ever tempt *you*, my dear, into setting up in that line. For you are very well-appearing, I assure you; and if you had been surrounded with all the disadvantages of the d'Anville, who knows but that you might have become as famous a Beauty as she? What makes a Beauty is not the sumptuous sculpture alone, but a very peculiar arrogance—not in the least arrogance of mind, my little governess. In this your d'Anville emerged from childhood full-panoplied indeed; and the feather-head court fell headlong at her feet. It was the fated creature's ruin.

ELOISE [*placidly*]. And it is because of her beauty that you drag her to the guillotine?

VALSIN. Bless you, I merely convey her!

ELOISE. Tell me, logician, was it not her beauty that inspired her to give her property to the Nation?

VALSIN. It was.

ELOISE. What perception! I am faint with admiration. And no doubt it was her beauty that made her a Republican?

VALSIN. What else?

ELOISE. Hail, oracle! [*She releases an arpeggio of satiric laughter.*]

VALSIN. That laugh is diaphanous. I see you through it, already convinced. [*She stops laughing immediately.*] Ha! we may proceed. Remark this, governess: a Beauty is the living evidence of man's immortality; the one plain proof that he has a soul.

ELOISE. It is not so bad then, after all?

VALSIN. It is utterly bad. But of all people a Beauty is most conscious of her duality. Her whole life is based upon her absolute knowledge that her Self and her body are two. She sacrifices all things to her beauty because her beauty feeds her Self with a dreadful food which it has made her unable to live without.

ELOISE. My little gentleman, you talk like a sentimental waiter. Your metaphors are all hot from the kitchen.

VALSIN [*nettled*]. It is natural; unlike your Eloise, I am *really* of "the People"—and starved much in my youth.

ELOISE. But, like her, you are still hungry.

VALSIN. A Beauty is a species of cannibal priestess, my dear. She will make burnt-offerings of her father and her mother, her sisters—her lovers—to her beauty, that it may in turn bring her the food she must have or perish.

ELOISE. *Boum!* [*She snaps her fingers.*] And of course she bathes in the blood of little children?

VALSIN [*grimly*]. Often.

ELOISE [*averting her gaze from his*]. This mysterious food——

VALSIN. Not at all mysterious. Sensation. There you have it. And that is why Eloise d'Anville is a renegade. You understand perfectly.

ELOISE. You are too polite. No.

VALSIN [*gaily*]. Behold, then! Many women who are not Beauties are beautiful, but in such women you do not always discover beauty at your first glance: it is disclosed with a subtle tardiness. It does not dazzle; it is reluctant; but it grows as you look again and again. You get a little here, a little there, like glimpses of children hiding in a garden. It is shy, and sometimes closed in from you altogether, and then unexpectedly, this belated loveliness springs into bloom before your very eyes. It retains the capacity of surprise, the vital element of charm. But the Beauty lays all waste before her at a stroke: it is soon over. Thus your Eloise, brought to court, startled Versailles; the sensation was overwhelming. Then Versailles got used to her, just as it had to its other prodigies: the fountains were there, the King was there, the d'Anville was there; and naturally, one had seen them; saw them every day—one talked of matters less accepted. That was horrible to Eloise. She had tasted; the appetite, once stirred, was insatiable. At any cost she must henceforth have always the sensation of being a sensation. She must be the pivot of a reeling world. So she went into politics. Ah, Citizeness, there was one man who understood Beauties—not Homer, who

wrote of Helen! Romance is gallant by profession, and Homer lied like a poet. For the truth about the Trojan War is that the wise Ulysses made it, not because Paris stole Helen, but because the Trojans were threatening to bring her back.

ELOISE [*unwarily*]. Who was the man that understood Beauties?

VALSIN. Bluebeard. [*He crosses the room to the dressing-table, leans his back against it in an easy attitude, his elbows resting upon the top.*]

ELOISE [*slowly, a little tremulously*]. And so Eloise d'Anville should have her head cut off?

VALSIN. Well, she thought she was in politics, didn't she? [*Suavely.*] You may be sure she thoroughly enjoyed her hallucination that she was a great figure in the Revolution—which was cutting off the heads of so many of her relatives and old friends. Don't waste your pity, my dear.

ELOISE [*looking at him fixedly*]. Citizen, you must have thought a great deal about my unhappy friend. She might be flattered by so searching an interest.

VALSIN [*negligently*]. Not interest in her, governess, but in the Emigrant who cools his heels on the other side of that door, greatly to my enjoyment, waiting my pleasure to arrest him. The poor wretch is the one remaining lover of this girl: faithful because he let his passion for her become a habit; and he will never get over it until he has had possession. She has made him suffer frightfully, but I shall never forgive her for not having

dealt him the final stroke. It would have saved me all the bother I have been put to in avenging the injury he did me.

ELOISE [*frowning*]. What "final stroke" could she have "dealt" him?

VALSIN [*with sudden vehement intensity*]. She could have loved him! [*He strikes the table with his fist.*] I see it! I see it! Beauty's husband! [*Pounding the table with each exclamation, his voice rising in excitement.*] What a vision! This damned, proud, loving Louis, a pomade bearer! A buttoner! An errand-boy to the perfumer's, to the chemist's, to the milliner's! A groom of the powder-closet——

ELOISE [*snatching at the opportunity*]. How noisy you are!

VALSIN [*discomfited, apologetically*]. You see, it is only so lately that we of "the People" have dared even to whisper. Of course, now that we are free to shout, we overdo it. We let our voices out, we let our joys out, we let our hates out. We let everything out—except our prisoners! [*He smiles winningly.*]

ELOISE [*slowly*]. Do you guess what all this bluster—this tirade upon the wickedness of beauty —makes me think?

VALSIN. Certainly. Being a woman, you cannot imagine a bitterness which is not "personal."

ELOISE [*laughing*]. "Being a woman," I think that the person who has caused you the greatest suffering in your life must be very good-looking!

VALSIN [*calmly*]. Quite right. It was precisely

this d'Anville. I will tell you. [*He sits on the arm of a chair near her, and continues briskly.*] I was not always a politician. Six years ago I was a soldier in the Valny regiment of cavalry. That was the old army, that droll army, that royal army; so ridiculous that it was truly majestic. In the Valny regiment we had some rouge-pots for officers—and for a colonel, who but our Emigrant yonder! Aha! we suffered in the ranks, let me tell you, when Eloise had been coy; and one morning it was my turn. You may have heard that she was betrothed first to Louis and later to several others? My martyrdom occurred the day after she had announced to the court her betrothal to the young Duc de Creil, whose father afterward interfered. Louis put us on drill in a hard rain: he had the habit of relieving his chagrin like that. My horse fell, and happened to shower our commander with mud. Louis let out all his rage upon me: it was an excuse, and, naturally, he disliked mud. But I was rolling in it, with my horse: I also disliked it—and I was indiscreet enough to attempt some small reply. That finished my soldiering, Citizeness. He had me tied to a post before the barracks for the rest of the day. I remember with remarkable distinctness that the valets of heaven had neglected to warm the rain for that bath; that it was February; and that Louis's orders had left me nothing to wear upon my back except an unfulsome descriptive placard and my modesty. Altogether it was a disadvantageous position, particularly for the ex-

change of repartee with such of my comrades as my youthful amiability had not endeared; I have seldom seen more cheerful indifference to bad weather. Inclement skies failed to injure the spectacle: it was truly the great performance of my career; some people would not even go home to eat and peddlers did a good trade in cakes and wine. In the evening they whipped me conscientiously—my tailor has never since made me an entirely comfortable coat. Then they gave me the place of honor at the head of a procession by torchlight and drummed me out of camp with my placard upon my back. So I adopted another profession: I had a friend who was a doctor in the stables of d'Artois; and I knew horses. He made me his assistant.

ELOISE [*shuddering*]. You are a veterinarian!

VALSIN [*smiling*]. No; a horse-doctor. It was thus I "retired" from the army and became a politician. My friend was only a horse-doctor himself, but his name happened to be Marat.

ELOISE. Ah, frightful! [*For the first time she begins to feel genuine alarm.*]

VALSIN. The sequence is simple. If Eloise d'Anville hadn't coquetted with young Creil I shouldn't be Commissioner here to-day, settling my account with Louis. I am in his debt for more than the beating: I should tell you there was a woman in my case, a slender lace-maker with dark eyes—very pretty eyes. She had furnished me with a rival, a corporal; and he brought her for a stroll in the rain past our barracks that day

when I was attracting so much unsought attention. They waited for the afterpiece, enjoyed a pasty and a bottle of Beaune, and went away laughing cozily together. I did not see my pretty lace-maker again, not for years—not until a month ago. Her corporal was still with her, and it was their turn to be undesirably conspicuous. They were part of a procession passing along the Rue St. Honoré on its way to the Place of the Revolution. They were standing up in the cart; the lace-maker had grown fat, and she was scolding her poor corporal bitterly. What a habit that must have been!—they were not five minutes from the guillotine. I own that a thrill of gratitude to Louis temporarily softened me toward him, though at the very moment I was following him through the crowd. At least he saved me from the lace-maker!

ELOISE [*shrinking from him*]. You are horrible!

VALSIN. To my regret you must find me more and more so.

ELOISE [*panting*]. You *are* going to take us back to Paris, then? To the Tribunal—and to the —— [*She covers her eyes with her hands.*]

VALSIN [*gravely*]. I can give you no comfort, governess. You are involved with the Emigrant, and, to be frank, I am going to do as horrible things to Louis as I can invent—and I am an ingenious man. [*His manner becomes sinister.*] I am near the top. The cinders of Marat are in the Pantheon but Robespierre still flames; and he claims me as his friend. I can do what I will.

And I have much in store for Louis before he shall be so fortunate as to die!

ELOISE [*faintly*]. And—and Eloise—d'Anville? [*Her hands fall from her face: he sees large, beautiful tears upon her cheeks.*]

VALSIN [*coldly*]. Yes. [*She is crushed for the moment; then, recovering herself with a violent effort, lifts her head defiantly and stands erect, facing him.*]

ELOISE. You take her head because your officer punished you, six years ago, for a breach of military discipline!

VALSIN [*in a lighter tone*]. Oh, no. I take it, just as she injured me—incidentally. In truth, Citizeness, it isn't I who take it: I only arrest her because the government has proscribed her.

ELOISE. And you've just finished telling me you were preparing tortures for her! I thought you an intelligent man. Pah! You're only a gymnast. [*She turns away from him haughtily and moves toward the door.*]

VALSIN [*touching his scarf of office*]. True. I climb. [*She halts suddenly, as if startled by this; she stands as she is, her back to him, for several moments, and does not change her attitude when she speaks.*]

ELOISE [*slowly*]. You climb alone.

VALSIN [*with a suspicious glance at her*]. Yes—alone.

ELOISE [*in a low voice*]. Why didn't you take the lace-maker with you? You might have been happier. [*Very slowly she turns and comes toward him, her eyes full upon his: she moves deliberately and with incomparable grace. He seems to be making*

an effort to look away, and failing: he cannot release his eyes from the glorious and starry glamor that holds them. She comes very close to him, so close that she almost touches him.]

ELOISE [*in a half-whisper*]. You might have been happier with—a friend—to climb with you.

VALSIN [*demoralized*]. Citizeness—I am—I——

ELOISE [*in a voice of velvet*]. Yes, say it. You are——

VALSIN [*desperately*]. I have told you that I am the most susceptible of men.

ELOISE [*impulsively putting her hand on his shoulder*]. Is it a crime? Come, my friend, you are a man who *does* climb: you will go over all. You believe in the Revolution because you have used it to lift you. But other things can help you, too. Don't you need them?

VALSIN [*understanding perfectly, gasping*]. Need what? [*She draws her hand from his shoulder, moves back from him slightly, and crosses her arms upon her bosom with a royal meekness.*]

ELOISE [*grandly*]. Do I seem so useless?

VALSIN [*in a distracted voice*]. Heaven help me! What do you want?

ELOISE. Let these people go. [*Hurriedly, leaning near him.*] I have promised to save them: give them their permit to embark, and I—— [*She pauses, flushing beautifully, but does not take her eyes from him.*] I—I do not wish to leave France. My place is in Paris. You will go into the National Committee. You can be its ruler. You *will* rule it! I believe in you! [*Glowing like*

a rose of fire.] I will go with you. I will help you! I will marry you!

VALSIN [*in a fascinated whisper*]. Good Lord! [*He stumbles back from her, a strange light in his eyes.*]

ELOISE. You are afraid——

VALSIN [*with sudden loudness*]. I am! Upon my soul, I am afraid!

ELOISE [*smiling gloriously upon him.*] Of what, my friend? Tell me of what?

VALSIN [*explosively*]. Of myself! I am afraid of myself because I am a prophet. This is precisely what I foretold to myself you would do! I knew it, yet I am aghast when it happens—aghast at my own cleverness!

ELOISE [*bewildered to blankness.*] What?

VALSIN [*half hysterical with outrageous vanity.*] I swear I knew it, and it fits so exactly that I am afraid of myself! *Aha,* Valsin, you rogue! I should hate to have you on *my* track! Citizen governess, you are a wonderful person, but not so wonderful as this devil of a Valsin!

ELOISE [*vaguely, in a dead voice*]. I cannot understand what you are talking about. Do you mean——

VALSIN. And what a spell was upon me! I was near calling Dossonville to preserve me.

ELOISE [*speaking with a strange naturalness, like a child's*]. You mean—you don't want me?

VALSIN. Ah, Heaven, help me, I am going to laugh again! Oh, ho, ho! I am spent! [*He drops into a chair and gives way to another attack of*

uproarious hilarity.] Ah, ha, ha, ha! Oh, my liver, ha, ha! No, Citizeness, I do not want you! Oh, ha, ha, ha!

ELOISE. *Oh!* [*She utters a choked scream and rushes at him.*] Swine!

VALSIN [*warding her off with outstretched hands*]. Spare me! Ha, ha, ha! I am helpless! Ho, ho, ho! Citizeness, it would not be worth your while to strangle a man who is already dying!

ELOISE [*beside herself*]. Do you dream that I *meant* it?

VALSIN [*feebly*]. Meant to strangle me?

ELOISE [*frantic*]. To give myself to you!

VALSIN. In short, to—to marry me! [*He splutters.*]

ELOISE [*furiously*]. It was a ruse——

VALSIN [*soothingly*]. Yes, yes, a trick. I saw that all along.

ELOISE [*even more infuriated*]. For their sake, beast! [*She points to the other room.*] To save *them!*

VALSIN [*wiping his eyes*]. Of course, of course. [*He rises, stepping quickly to the side of the chair away from her and watching her warily.*] *I* knew it was to save them. We'll put it like that.

ELOISE [*in an anger of exasperation*]. It *was* that!

VALSIN. Yes, yes. [*Keeping his distance.*] I saw it from the first. [*Suppressing symptoms of returning mirth.*] It was perfectly plain. You mustn't excite yourself—nothing could have been clearer! [*A giggle escapes him, and he steps hastily backward as she advances upon him.*]

ELOISE. Poodle! Valet! Scum of the alleys! Sheep of the prisons! Jailer! Hangman! Assassin! Brigand! *Horse-doctor!* [*She hurls the final epithet at him in a climax of ferocity which wholly exhausts her; and she sinks into the chair by the desk, with her arms upon the desk and her burning face hidden in her arms.* VALSIN, *morbidly chuckling, in spite of himself, at each of her insults, has retreated farther and farther, until he stands with his back against the door of the inner room, his right hand behind him, resting on the latch. As her furious eyes leave him he silently opens the door, letting it remain a few inches ajar and keeping his back to it. Then, satisfied that what he intends to say will be overheard by those within, he erases all expression from his face, and strides to the dismantled doorway in the passage.*]

VALSIN [*calling loudly*]. Dossonville! [*He returns, coming down briskly to* ELOISE. *His tone is crisp and soldier-like.*] Citizeness, I have had my great hour. I proceed with the arrests. I have given you four plenty of time to prepare yourselves. Time? Why, the Emigrant could have changed clothes with one of the women in there a dozen times if he had hoped to escape in that fashion—as historical prisoners *have* won clear, it is related. Fortunately, that is impossible just now; and he will not dare to attempt it.

DOSSONVILLE [*appearing in the hallway*]. Present, my chieftain!

VALSIN [*sharply*]. Attend, Dossonville. The returned Emigrant, Valny-Cherault, is forfeited;

but because I cherish a special grievance against him, I have decided upon a special punishment for him. It does not please me that he should have the comfort and ministrations of loving women on his journey to the Tribunal. No, no; the presence of his old sweetheart would make even the scaffold sweet to him. Therefore I shall take him alone. I shall let these women go.

DOSSONVILLE. What refinement! Admirable! [ELOISE *slowly rises, staring incredulously at* VALSIN.]

VALSIN [*picking up the "permit" from the desk*]. "Permit the Citizen Balsage and his sister, the Citizeness Virginie Balsage and his second sister, Marie Balsage, and Eloise d'Anville——" Ha! You see, Dossonville, since one of these three women is here, there are two in the other room with the Emigrant. They are to come out, leaving him there. First, however, we shall disarm him. You and I have had sufficient experience in arresting aristocrats to know that they are not always so sensible as to give themselves up peaceably, and I happened to see the outline of a pistol under the Emigrant's frock the other day in the diligence. We may as well save one of us from a detestable hole through the body. [*He steps toward the door, speaking sharply.*] Emigrant, you have heard. For your greater chagrin, these three devoted women are to desert you. Being an aristocrat you will pretend to prefer this arrangement. They are to leave at once. Throw your pistol into

this room, and I will agree not to make the arrest until they are in safety. They can reach your vessel in five minutes. When they have gone, I give you my word not to open this door for ten. [*A pistol is immediately thrown out of the door, and falls at* VALSIN'S *feet. He picks it up, his eyes alight with increasing excitement.*]

VALSIN [*tossing the pistol to* DOSSONVILLE]. Call the lieutenant. [DOSSONVILLE *goes to the window, leans out, and beckons.* VALSIN *writes hastily at the desk, not sitting down.*] "Permit the three women Balsage to embark without delay upon the *Jeune Pierrette.* Signed: Valsin." There, Citizeness, is a "permit" which permits. [*He thrusts the paper into the hand of* ELOISE, *swings toward the door of the inner room, and raps loudly upon it.*] Come, my feminines! Your sailors await you—brave, but no judges of millinery. There's a fair wind for you; and a grand toilet is wasted at sea. Come, charmers, come! [*The door is half opened, and* MADAME DE LASEYNE, *white and trembling violently, enters quickly, shielding as much as she can the inexpressibly awkward figure of her brother, behind whom she extends her hand, closing the door sharply. He wears the brocaded skirt which* MADAME DE LASEYNE *has taken from the portmanteau, and* ELOISE'S *long mantle, the lifted hood and* MADAME DE LASEYNE'*s veil shrouding his head and face.*]

VALSIN [*in a stifled voice*]. At last! At last one beholds the regal d'Anville! No Amazon——

DOSSONVILLE [*aghast*]. It looks like——

VALSIN [*shouting*]. It doesn't! [*He bows gallantly to* LOUIS.] A cruel veil, but oh, what queenly grace! [LOUIS *stumbles in the skirt.* VALSIN *falls back, clutching at his side. But* ELOISE *rushes to* LOUIS *and throws herself upon her knees at his feet. She pulls his head down to hers and kisses him through the veil.*]

VALSIN [*madly*]. Oh, touching devotion! Oh, sisters! Oh, love! Oh, honey! Oh, petticoats——

DOSSONVILLE [*interrupting humbly*]. The lieutenant, Citizen Commissioner. [*He points to the hallway, where the officer appears, standing at attention.*]

VALSIN [*wheeling*]. Officer, conduct these three persons to the quay. Place them on board the *Jeune Pierrette.* The captain will weigh anchor instantly. [*The officer salutes.*]

ANNE [*hoarsely to* LOUIS, *who is lifting the weeping* ELOISE *to her feet*]. Quick! In the name of——

VALSIN. Off with you! [MADAME DE LASEYNE *seizes the portmanteau and rushes to the broken doorway, half dragging the others with her. They go out in a tumultuous hurry, followed by the officer.* ELOISE *sends one last glance over her shoulder at* VALSIN *as she disappears, and one word of concentrated venom: "*Buffoon!" *In wild spirits he blows a kiss to her. The fugitives are heard clattering madly down the stairs.*]

DOSSONVILLE [*excitedly*]. We can take the Emigrant now. [*Going to the inner door.*] Why wait——

VALSIN. That room is empty.

DOSSONVILLE. What!

VALSIN [*shouting with laughter*]. He's gone! Not bare-backed, but in petticoats, that's worse! He's gone, I tell you! The other was the d'Anville.

DOSSONVILLE. Then you recog——

VALSIN. Imbecile, she's as well known as the Louvre! They're off on their honeymoon! She'll take him now! She will! She will, on the soul of a prophet! [*He rushes to the window and leans far out, shouting at the top of his voice.*] *Quits with you, Louis! Quits! Quits!* [*He falls back from the window and relapses into a chair, cackling ecstatically.*]

DOSSONVILLE [*hoarse with astonishment*]. You've let him go! You've let 'em *all* go!

VALSIN [*weak with laughter*]. Well, *you're* not going to inform. [*With a sudden reversion to extreme seriousness, he levels a sinister forefinger at his companion.*] And, also, take care of your health, friend; remember constantly that you have a weak throat, *and don't you ever mention this to my wife!* These are bad times, my Dossonville, and neither you nor I will see the end of them. Good Lord! Can't we have a little fun as we go along? [*A fresh convulsion seizes him, and he rocks himself pitiably in his chair.*]

THE CURTAIN

BOOTH TARKINGTON.

NOVEMBER 26

THE EYES OF MONSIEUR RENAUD

DOWN there in the Taumotus the sun is not to be trifled with. It pours out of the sky like molten brass, and where it falls unchecked sears the earth as with living flame. Not a blade of grass is to be seen in these atolls, and even the coral of which they are formed is bleached to a deathly pallor.

Yet here Monsieur Renaud lived and throve, for the lagoons of the Taumotus are natural storehouses of treasure unequalled in the world, and he had forced their locks.

Each morning as the inevitable sun climbed from the sea a black serpent put out from shore, leaving an ugly scar on the fair face of the lagoon. Presently it would break into a score of fragments, each resolving itself into a pearling canoe complete with naked diver and mate. And somewhere amongst them would be Monsieur Renaud, hunched over the gunwale of his dugout, scouring the sea floor through a water-glass. Never were eyes quicker than his to catch a glimpse of shell. That was why he made a point of directing his own fleet, and that also accounted for his wealth. For those were the halcyon days of unrestricted

diving, before a pettifogging Government stepped in to ordain that pearls should be the property of the diver—the property, if you please, of some brainless bronze giant who knew no more than to sell them to the highest bidder and drink himself to death on the proceeds. You should have heard Monsieur Renaud on the subject!

But by the time the measure came into force he was beyond being affected by it. Apart from the substantial fortune he had derived from shell, and deposited in a Tahiti bank, there were his pearls. Each was perfect. It would not have been kept otherwise, and Monsieur Renaud's chief amusement of an evening was to open the door of the safe where they lay in a bed of cotton wool and fondle them in much the same way that he fondled his adoring Parisian wife and little daughter Jeanne.

"So!" he exclaimed one evening while engaged in this pleasurable pastime. "So, they would give you to the savage. They would indeed cast pearls before swine. Sacrilege!" He swung to the door of the safe with a clang that caused Jeanne to come running to his knee, and madame to look up from her needlework in alarm.

"It is nothing," he answered her anxious look. "Only that we shall shortly go to live in Paris." He explained the edict that had gone forth. "So, you see, there is nothing to keep us here longer."

Madame Renaud regarded her husband with incredulous brown eyes. She had often heard him talk in this strain, but never with such tones of

finality. Was it possible that he now meant what he had said so airily in the past, never dreaming of the torture he was inflicting—that Paris would be theirs in the near future, a small *hôtel* in the Rue Voulois, close to the shops and the Opera? Paris. . . .

A flush came to Madame Renaud's cheeks, and her hands trembled over her work as she listened to what her husband was telling Jeanne.

"But yes, little one, there are other places in the world than the Taumotus; others even than Papeete, where you may remember making yourself ill with ice cream. Where we are going there are shops filled with wonders, and at night lit up like fairyland. And it is cool there, even cold sometimes, so that you must wear little furs, and bowl a hoop through the gardens to keep warm. A hoop? Ah, you will soon learn all about hoops."

"May *bébé* come, too?" enquired Jeanne. She was a serious child for her years, and already concerned over the possible fate of a pet turtle that lived in a neighboring rock pool.

"How could we leave *bébé?*" laughed Monsieur Renaud non-committally, and setting the child down, turned to his wife.

"And what has *maman* to say?" he suggested, rubbing his strong hands together in anticipation of her pleasure.

Madame Renaud looked up and smiled as she knew he would have her smile.

"You will miss many things," she ventured.

"So that is all?" Monsieur Renaud relapsed

with the air of a disappointed schoolboy, then leant forward so that his starched drills crackled under the strain. "I shall miss many things," he mocked. "The everlasting heat and glare, perhaps, or a strip of coral and a few tattered pandanus palms. Or again, it may be the embarrassing variety of our fare—the grated cocoanut, the eternal fish!" His face took on a look of tragedy that caused Madame Renaud to laugh in spite of herself, and her husband to continue, elated at his success: "No, no, *ma cherie*, it is other things that I shall miss, and good riddance to them—the pallor of your cheek, the weariness in your eyes. We have enough. We will proceed to live."

"When?" said Madame Renaud. It was the first time she had permitted herself to ask such a direct question on the subject.

Her husband leant back in his chair, and studied the ceiling for a space.

"I will make one more trip with the fleet," he mused. "There is a corner of the lagoon, deep, yet possible, which interests me. . . . One last trip, then I will sell to the Compagnie Maritime who have long wished to buy, and—a month," he ended abruptly, "in a month at latest. Will that leave time enough for you to prepare?"

"Ample," said Madame Renaud, who would have cheerfully been ready in a day, but the tone failed to satisfy her husband.

"You are not pleased," he accused. "Is it possible that you do not wish to go?"

Madame Renaud smiled wistfully at the impulsiveness of this husband of hers, usually so reserved, so deliberate. How could she tell him her heart had so often danced to the tune of that magic word "Paris," and been stilled by disappointment, that she now found herself incapable of displaying proper appreciation?

"It is not that," she said gently. "I was thinking——"

"Thinking?" boomed Monsieur Renaud. "Of what should you be thinking but the hats that you will wear, and of how Jeanne will look on the boulevards?"

"I was thinking," persisted his wife, "that I would rather you did not make that last trip to the lagoon."

Monsieur Renaud stared at her bemused.

"I do not like 'last trips,'" she added gravely. Whereupon her husband laughed aloud, kissed her with the utmost tenderness, and turned his attention to other matters.

And the next day he directed the fleet as usual. He took it to a far corner of the lagoon, where his hawk-like eyes had detected shell at a greater depth than the divers had yet essayed. Standing up in his dugout, he told the assembled company of brown-skinned men and women that these would be their last descents in his employ. That they had worked for him loyally, and that in return he proposed to give each a present before he bade them farewell. He therefore hoped that to-day's would be a record showing of shell.

It was. Never had the raft, on which the immense pearl oysters were opened, been so laden, and never had the eyes of Monsieur Renaud been so quick to detect a pause in the process of opening. It was as he thought; this shell, deep down, old and barnacle encrusted, contained what all men sought in the Taumotus—occasional pearls of varying size, shape, and color. Most of them were worthless, a few might pass muster, but one —there is always the chance of this one—a perfect product of the disease that gave it birth. Pink, pearshaped, and with a peach-like bloom, it rested in the unworthy setting of Monsieur Renaud's begrimed palm. His keen eyes devoured it, his fingers closed reverently upon it, as he crumpled down on the shell-strewn raft.

What had happened? He asked himself the question with growing impatience. There was a pearl in his hand. He could feel it, yet it had dissolved into a blood-red mist. His head ached. *Ciel,* how it ached! And the divers were about him, shuffling, muttering. They were lifting him bodily—into the dugout—and the dugout was moving—he could hear the splash of paddles, feel the blessed motion of air after the sweltering glare that had enveloped him throughout the day. But that was all. The rest was a red curtain—rung down.

It was the same when they lifted him from the dugout, and he lurched up the beach like a drunken man. It was the same when he heard his wife's voice, and stumbled toward it. . . .

It was the same five years later, and would be to the end. An oculist had come from Papeete and said as much. As already pointed out, the sun of the Taumotus is not to be trifled with.

Monsieur Renaud had suggested that the original plan of returning to Paris should be adhered to in spite of his infliction. They (his wife and Jeanne) should be his eyes. They would tell him just how things looked, the new hats of *maman*, Jeanne's play in the gardens. It would be great fun. He smiled as he said such things, a smile that would have deceived most people, but never his wife. To her, he had always been a man transparent. That was why she had married him. And she knew that as things were, Paris would be a little short of torture to him.

"I do not understand," he muttered when the subject came under discussion. "It seemed to me before—before it happened, that you would have liked to go. I hope——"

"If you remember," his wife's low voice came from behind the curtain, "I was not enthusiastic about it."

Monsieur Renaud nodded reminiscently.

"But it is strange," he mused, "strange that a woman should prefer the Taumotus to Paris."

"Perhaps I *am* strange," admitted madame. "Hark! There are the canoes."

The sonorous hoot of a conch came over the water, and Monsieur Renaud felt his way to the veranda—he hated being helped—and stood facing the lagoon.

"How many?" he asked eagerly.

"Forty," answered his wife.

His face brightened.

"Ah, the Compagnie Maritime is growing. Forty, eh? But I'll wager they get no more shell than I used to with half that number. And no pearls, no pearls at all!" He chuckled and, dragging forward the cane chair, sat listening to the sounds he knew so well—the dry rattle of pandanus leaves, the eternal roar of the surf on the outer beach, the peckings and struttings of the mynah birds. Often he smiled. And he would not smile like that in Paris, no. Madame Renaud was convinced of it.

Then there came another and overwhelming reason for remaining on the atoll, nothing less than the failure of the bank in Tahiti. The letter explaining the tragedy—as connected in some subtle fashion with the bursting of the South Sea cotton bubble—interested Madame Renaud not at all. What occupied most of her time and sapped her remaining strength was the struggle to make ends meet. While her husband sat smiling across the lagoon, or crooning over his pearls, it was hers to devise ways and means of saving him from anxiety, and harboring the slim resources that remained from the wreckage of his fortune. So the lean years dragged on.

"Jeanne," she at last told her daughter, now a petite sixteen-year-old edition of herself, "you will look after him?"

"Need you ask *maman?*" cried Jeanne in an

agony of apprehension. "But why do you speak like this?"

Her mother smiled, and took her hand.

"Listen, Jeanne. This is no country for a white woman. Remember that. And get André to take you away from it as soon—as soon as it is possible. You understand?"

Jeanne blushed, but nodded obediently. She had no idea that her mother had noticed so much concerning André of the Compagnie Maritime.

"He is a good boy," said Madame Renaud, "and you are a fortunate child—but no more fortunate than your mother. Remember that, also."

Jeanne nodded again. She could not speak.

"Consider your father before all things," continued Madame Renaud. "He is easily managed. A great boy. You will keep from him the bank failure, and anything that might upset him. You are old for your years. You will attend to these things."

A faint sound came from the room beyond, and Jeanne moved swiftly to the bead curtain of the doorway, but there was no one there. Her father was standing at the veranda rail smiling his serene smile across the lagoon. Already Jeanne felt the responsibility of her trust. Already it was part of her religion. He must never know—never.

So the gentle deception was handed on, for Madame Renaud had spoken on a bed from which she never rose. But the difficulties of successful

subterfuge increased with time. There was practically nothing left, yet still Monsieur Renaud's chief pastime consisted of playing with toys worth a young fortune. Jeanne would watch the changing expression of his face as he sat there at the table arranging and rearranging his precious baubles to form a necklace, a brooch, a pendant, while he related the history of each.

"Ah, here is the fellow that gave the trouble. But is he not worth it? See the luster! See the perfection of form. . . ."

It was maddening. It could not go on. Jeanne told herself this with increasing insistence as time passed, and always the memory of her promise—"You will keep from him the bank failure, and anything that might upset him"—rose up to give her pause. How was it possible to have recourse to their sole remaining means of support without betraying the situation? It was for Jeanne to find a way.

She would have told André of her trouble, but pride forbade. It was enough to have to go to him without a *dot*, and on the strict understanding that they should not leave the Taumotus as long as her father lived. André should not be imposed on further, she decided, though he appeared to like nothing better.

Often she would sit on the outer beach, hands clasped about knees, hair streaming in the wind, and ask counsel of the surf. It had always been her good friend, and one day it made answer.

". . . Take them!" it thundered, with a

flurry of spindrift that danced in miniature rainbows before the sun. "Take them—so long as he does not know—*so long as he does not know. . . .*"

And he need not know. The thought leapt at Jeanne out of the turmoil about her. She scrambled to her feet and hurried up the beach, never pausing until she stood before the counter of the local store.

"M'sieur Challier," said Jeanne, addressing a heavily built man with bilious eyes. "I find it impossible to pay your bill for the month until the next mail from Tahiti."

"But it is nothing," protested Challier, leaning over the counter to feast his eyes on Jeanne's wind-whipped face. "If you allow such a trifle to disturb you for one instant, I shall be desolated."

"You are kind " said Jeanne, and ordered what she required.

She had turned to leave, when a thought seemed to strike her.

"You deal in pearls?" she asked.

Challier flung wide his huge hands.

"For what else am I in these pestiferous islands, mam'selle?"

"Pipi pearls?"

He puckered his thick lips, and blinked at the corrugated iron roof of the store.

"From you, mam'selle, yes, I would buy pipi, though, as you know, they are from other shell

than the pearl oyster, and of little marketable value."

Jeanne puckered her lips also. Challier found it an adorable sight.

"It may be curious," she mused, "but I like pipi best, they are so colorful. Some are like gold."

"Exactly," grinned Challier, "they are like anything but pearl."

"Yet except for their color they are the same."

"True."

"By weight, touch, and test."

"Yes. It is only a matter of fashion. Who knows? Some day Paris may decree that pipi are *de rigueur*. Until then"—Challier shrugged his massive shoulders—"I fear I can offer you but little for your pipi, mam'selle."

"Fashion is stupid," said Jeanne.

"Stupid, but inexorable," added Challier.

"So that I shall take advantage of it where I may," proceeded Jeanne with a toss of her small head. "But you have misunderstood me. I have no pipi to sell. I wish to buy them for a necklace." Challier's gaze became fixed. "Or, if you will, to exchange real pearls for them. Then I shall have the difference of their value in money, and the kind of necklace that I like—in spite of it not being the fashion," Jeanne explained with charming naïveté. "Is that not so, M'sieur Challier?"

Challier did not attempt to deny it. Why

should he? It was evident what this bewitching child intended to do, for he knew most things about the Renauds, and it seemed he at least stood a chance of securing some of the old man's well-known pearls.

Jeanne left with a selection of some fifty pipi, and that evening carried her plan into effect. It was necessary to sit very close to the table whereon Monsieur Renaud played as usual with his toys, select one for comparison with its possible duplicate in pipi, and replace it the instant his hand moved in its direction. It was a nerve-wracking process, but Jeanne persevered. And presently an unequalled opportunity occurred. Her father was engaged on a small but intricate design, and the remaining pearls lay discarded for some time. Jeanne took one, closed her eyes, and shook it together with the pipi in the hollow of her hands. But afterward, between finger and thumb, she, even *she*—could tell the difference. It seemed hopeless.

Yet with practice she became more adept, and presently it seemed that the thing was done. She could detect no difference . . . no difference at all. . . .

"Ah," sighed Monsieur Renaud, "tell me, little Jeanne, how does that look?"

He had spoken while Jeanne's eyes were closed, while every nerve was centered in her finger tips. The shock of his voice coming out of the black silence caused her to drop one of the pearls—and it was not the pipi. It fell with the faintest sound

on the matting of the floor, but Monsieur Renaud heard it.

"One has fallen!" he cried in alarm.

"No, no," protested Jeanne to cover her confusion, and slipped the pipi amongst the rest.

"One has fallen," repeated Monsieur Renaud. "Am I deaf as well as blind?"

It was seldom that he spoke thus. Nothing, it seemed, angered or pleased him now except his toys. Jeanne had come to hate the sight of them.

"Count them, Father," she suggested gently, and watched his groping fingers with a kind of desperate resignation.

Here was the test. When he came to the intruding pipi Jeanne's heart stood still. When it passed muster and lay a glaring alien amongst the rest a sudden weakness assailed her.

"There, what did I say?" she laughed nervously, and leant against the table for support. . . .

Monsieur Renaud made no answer as he consigned his treasures to the safe, but turning, felt for his daughter's hand.

"Forgive me, Jeanne," he said. "I grow old. But, child, you are cold. . . ."

Jeanne took the pearl to Challier, who, after shaking his head over its various and imaginary defects, offered her a third of its value. She accepted. To her it seemed a stupendous sum, enough to pay expenses for months to come. That evening she hummed a song over her needlework, and went to meet André with a lighter heart.

There was no reason why this harmless and highly successful method of supporting the household should not have been continued indefinitely. No reason, that is, except Challier. But he was not satisfied with it, and when Challier was not satisfied others were soon made aware of the fact. He pointed out that one pearl was of little use to him. He would exchange, say, twenty more at the same generous figure, and make a consignment to Paris.

"But I do not wish to exchange twenty more," protested Jeanne.

"I understood it was a necklace of pipi that you had set your heart on," Challier leered at her across the counter. "One pipi hardly makes a necklace, mam'selle."

A sudden fear possessed Jeanne. What did he mean? How much did he know?

"When I wish to exchange more I will do so," she said evenly.

Challier inclined his head.

"As you will. But, unfortunately, I cannot deal in that way."

"Then I will go elsewhere."

Jeanne had reached the door before Challier's voice again assailed her.

"That, of course, is possible, but is it advisable?"

"Why not?" She turned and faced him squarely.

Challier made pretence of arranging his stock behind the counter.

"You would hardly wish others to know," he suggested.

And suddenly it was borne in on Jeanne that he knew all. The revelation came with the force of a physical blow. But her voice was steady as she answered him: "I will consider the matter and let you know, Monsieur Challier."

"That is the wisest course, mam'selle. Believe me, it is not that I wish to persuade you against your will, but business is business even with so charming a customer as yourself. And when you come to consider this matter, I trust you will bear in mind that I am *paying* for your pearls—at present."

Which meant that by the simple threat of exposure he could force her to part with them for nothing. It was so. His tone of ghastly benignity followed Jeanne into the glare outside, and echoed in her ears as she walked blindly to the house and flung herself face downward on the bed. She had not known such things as Challier existed. He said that this was "business." Did "business," then, transform all men into beasts of prey? Perhaps. Perhaps even André. . . . She was alone; alone in a new-found world that filled her with disgust and alarm.

And after an infinity of trouble the additional pearls became Challier's. At the time it seemed to Jeanne the only course. At least she received payment for them, and she could not be sure of even that in the future. So Monsieur Renaud's toys had become a motley collection, an offence to the eye, and practically worthless. More than

once it seemed to Jeanne that he fingered them with suspicion. Certainly he played with them less. Was he tiring of his pastime? She prayed that it was so.

But on a day some two weeks later all thought of past or future was swept from her mind by a happening in Challier's store. She had gone there at his request, dreading the interview, yet not daring to evade it.

"Is it that you demand the remaining pearls?" she asked him coldly.

"No," said Challier, smiling down at her. "It is that I have a mind to return all I possess in exchange for one—the rarest of Monsieur Renaud's collection."

Jeanne's eyes met his in puzzled scrutiny.

"You mean the one he brought back from his last trip?"

"I mean yourself, mam'selle."

For a moment Jeanne was surprised into a betrayal of her true feelings. Her gaze rested on Challier with an abhorrence that would have seared another man; then, as self-possession returned, a smile parted her white lips.

"I fear I must disappoint you, Monsieur Challier. I am betrothed."

"Betrothed!" he mocked. "Calf love! What is that beside my offer—a sufficiency, a good name, an end to all your anxieties?" He was beside her. "I want you, Jeanne, I have watched you from the time when you played as a child in the sand. I want you—and what I want I am in

the habit of getting," he added in a harsh crescendo as she shrank before him. "I have made you an honorable offer. Think!"

Jeanne stood very white and still.

"I thank you for your offer," she said in a low voice. "But I have thought. And if you must know what I think, I would kill myself before accepting it."

Even Challier was impressed by the cold finality of the tone. He stood silent a space, then laughed softly.

"So that is the way of it? You flatter me, mam'selle. And would you apply such drastic methods to your father?"

"You mean——"

"I mean that he is old. That there is no telling at his age and in his condition how he would take certain news that has been withheld from him overlong."

A low cry escaped Jeanne.

Her torturer stood nodding his head.

"So you will perhaps think again, mam'selle. I trust you will think again. . . ."

Jeanne glanced to right and left like a wild thing at bay, then turned and fled into the sunshine, across the strip of coral sand, through the narrow belt of palms, and so to the outer beach, where the surf thundered its welcome.

Challier awaited Jeanne's decision longer than he was in the habit of waiting for anything, but it was not forthcoming. More than once he saw her

moving about the Renauds' bungalow, but neither by word nor look had she recognized his existence. The delay puzzled and angered him. Finally he called, fully expecting to be met at the door by a vanquished and amenable Jeanne, but the old man heard his footfall, and hailed him into the living-room.

"Challier, I swear," was the old man's greeting.

"Correct," said Challier. "But how did you know?"

The old man wagged his head sagely.

"I am not so helpless as some imagine. I carry my sight elsewhere than in my eyes, that is all."

"In your ears, perhaps."

"Yes, and in other places besides. But this is kind, Challier. I am alone. Pray be seated."

There was something uncanny in the old man's perception. Challier felt it as he sat there a trifle uneasily.

"I have come to make a request," he blurted suddenly.

Monsieur Renaud bowed.

"Name it," he invited.

"For the hand of your daughter, Jeanne," said Challier. "You know me, m'sieur. I can only say that I love her before all else. Have you any objection?"

Monsieur Renaud leant back in his chair, and crossed his thin legs.

"But this is sad," he said. "You are late in the field, my dear Challier. Jeanne is already betrothed."

"To a mere infant, without prospects," Challier interposed; "but you cannot take such an affair seriously."

"I?" Monsieur Renaud lifted his shaggy eyebrows. "Alas, I am not in a position to control such a matter. It is in Jeanne's hands, and I believe she takes it in all seriousness."

Challier shifted his position with impatient abruptness.

"And I am convinced that I can persuade her to take it otherwise," he said shortly. "Have I your permission to do so?"

Monsieur Renaud smiled and swung his slippered foot back and forth.

"Permission?" he repeated. "Times have changed, Challier. It is for Jeanne to decide."

"Very well, then," snapped Challier, and rose to go.

"But wait," interposed Monsieur Renaud. "It is only right that one interested in my Jeanne should know the extent of her *dot*."

"It does not concern me," said Challier.

"No?" Monsieur Renaud swung open the door of the safe and exposed to view an atrocious collection of multicolored pipi. "As an expert, do these not interest you, Challier?" The old man placed a finger to his nose, and spoke in an absurd whisper: "They will be Jeanne's, all Jeanne's. Note the luster, the delicacy of coloring. He will be a wealthy man, the husband of my Jeanne."

"They are indeed magnificent!" exclaimed

Challier, at a loss for other words, and as though they had been a signal Monsieur Renaud swung to the door of the safe and crumpled into his chair.

He seemed on the instant to have shrunk into one incredibly old. The lines of his face had deepened. His unseeing eyes stared with terrible fixity at the opposite wall. He was thinking as only the blind can think, piecing together sounds and sensations of the past to form a mental picture of happenings he had never seen. A vague alarm seized on Challier. He was moving noiselessly toward the door when the old man's voice broke the silence, low, deliberate, strangely compelling.

"Not yet, Challier. You must not go yet. You are either kind, or—— Let me think. Sit down."

Challier obeyed in spite of himself.

"I fail to understand," he said with feigned unconcern.

"You fail to understand," repeated Monsieur Renaud grimly, "but that is perhaps natural. Let me explain by asking a question. How came you to be so glib a deceiver? Out of consideration for me?"

"Deceiver?"

"Yes; for you must have seen as clearly with your eyes as I with the senses remaining to me that those are not pearls as you and I understand them."

"Then you know!" The words were wrung from Challier in an involuntary undertone.

"Know? From the first I have known," declared Monsieur Renaud. "Do you think such trash as lies in that safe would pass muster with me?"

"Then why do you allow the deception to continue?"

"That is a family matter." Monsieur Renaud smiled reminiscently. "Still, so that you may follow my reasoning, and perhaps help me to a conclusion, you had better hear it. I allow the deception to continue because of a promise exacted from Jeanne many years ago. A death-bed promise—that I chanced to overhear. I do not like such things. They are too uncompromising for the young, but, there, it was made. I was never to know of the bank failure—you will remember it—never! It was and is Jeanne's life to keep that from me. And she will have broken her promise if I let her know that I have detected the substitution of trash for my beloved pearls. For that is what she has been driven to, Challier, to keep us alive. And how can she account for doing such a thing except by admitting that we are penniless? I tell you, we who are blind have time to think. So I continued to play with my pearls though it was hard work sometimes, hard work."

Monsieur Renaud paused, then leant forward with startling suddenness.

"And less than two weeks after that first substitution twenty more took place. Twenty, at one fell swoop! Then I knew there must be something radically amiss. She had sold the first one to keep us alive. Where had the money gone in

that short time to necessitate the sale of twenty more? It costs little to keep us alive, Challier. Someone was either taking advantage of her innocence and buying at a grotesque figure, or had tasted blood, and was bringing undue influence to bear on the child to secure more. In the one case, he is a robber. In the other, he is something worse."

Monsieur Renaud smote the table with his clenched fist.

"I am looking for that man, Challier!"

Challier moistened his lips. Not for the first time during this strange interview he was aware that there was something uncanny about it. The absolute logic of the old man's deductions—not to mention their accuracy—made it appear that he was gifted with second sight. Challier fought against the notion, but it survived.

"And what will you do when you find him?" he suggested ironically.

Monsieur Renaud raised his clenched fist, then lowered it.

"Nothing," he said. "There is no need. I should like to know who the man is that will be dogged to his grave by every manner of ill-fortune, that is all."

"And why should that befall him?" Challier strove to maintain a tone of levity.

"But you cannot be serious in asking such a question," said Monsieur Renaud.

"I can assure you that I am."

"Then you have no superstition?"

"None."

"You are to be envied. Most of us have, though some will not admit it. Frankly, Challier, I am sorry for this fellow. He does not know, he cannot know, what lies in store for him who takes advantage of the blind."

Challier stiffened in his chair. It was a well-known axiom in the islands, and he had never thought of it. . . . Bah! What childish absurdity! He rose, and moved toward the door. The old man lay crumpled in his chair, staring, staring—at nothing. Yet there was not a doubt that in his own fashion he saw. . . .

"*Au revoir*, Monsieur Renaud," Challier called back at him. "I wish you luck in your search."

But Monsieur Renaud's search was ended. He had found his man.

What went on in Challier's store for the next week no one knows, for it was shut. But the Taumotus are a curious place, and superstition thrives there. Moreover, it is difficult to avoid signs and portents when living alone on an atoll infested by them, and still more difficult when one's only company is the bottle.

When the authorities forced an entrance they found a trembling wreck of a man who could do no more than thrust into their hands a small square package containing pearls and gibber about the eyes of Monsieur Renaud.

RALPH STOCK.

NOVEMBER 27

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Chapter 1

THE song of songs, which *is* Solomon's.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love *is* better than wine.

Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.

I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

Look not upon me, because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,

go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

Thy cheeks are comely with rows *of jewels*, thy neck with chains *of gold*.

We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

While the king *sitteth* at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

A bundle of myrrh *is* my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.

Behold, thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes.

Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green.

The beams of our house *are* cedar, *and* our rafters of fir.

Chapter 2

I am the rose of Sharon, *and* the lily of the valleys.

As the lily among thorns so *is* my love among the daughters.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so *is* my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me *was* love.

Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I *am* sick of love.

His left hand *is* under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice.

My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone;

The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing *of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;

The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tender grape give a *good* smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely.

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines *have* tender grapes.

My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: he feedeth among the lilies.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

Chapter 3

By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

I will rise now and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

The watchmen that go about the city found me: *to whom I said,* Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

Who *is* this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

Behold his bed, which *is* Solomon's; three score valiant men *are* about it, of the valiant of Israel.

They all hold swords, *being* expert in war: every man *hath* his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

He made the pillars thereof *of* silver, the bottom thereof *of* gold, the covering of it *of* purple, the midst thereof being paved *with* love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

Chapter 4

Beuold, thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair *is* as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.

Thy teeth *are* like a flock of *sheep that are even* shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none *is* barren among them.

Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet; and thy speech *is* comely: thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh. and to the hill of frankincense.

Thou *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee.

Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.

Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, *my*

spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!

Thy lips, O *my* spouse, drop *as* the honeycomb: honey and milk *are* under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments *is* like the smell of Lebanon.

A garden inclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Thy plants *are* an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,

Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

Chapter 5

I am come into my garden, my sister, *my* spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying,* Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my

head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.

I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet: how shall I defile them?

My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved for him.

I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love.

What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven.

His eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set.

His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires.

His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Chapter 6

Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

I *am* my beloved's, and my beloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

Thou *art* beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as *an army* with banners.

Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair *is* as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

Thy teeth *are* as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and *there is* not one barren among them.

As a piece of a pomegranate *are* thy temples within thy locks.

There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

My dove, my undefiled is *but* one; she *is* the *only* one of her mother, she *is* the choice *one* of her that

bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; *yea,* the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

Who *is* she *that* looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, *and* terrible as *an army* with banners?

I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, *and* to see whether the vine flourished, *and* the pomegranates budded.

Or ever I was aware, my soul made me *like* the chariots of Amminadib.

Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.

Chapter 7

How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs *are* like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning work man.

Thy navel *is like* a round goblet, *which* wanteth not liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes *that are* twins.

Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory, thine eyes *like* the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim; thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

Thine head upon thee *is* like Carmel, and the

hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* held in the galleries.

How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters *of grapes*.

I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;

And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.

I *am* my beloved's, and his desire *is* toward me.

Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender grape appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates *are* all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

Chapter 8

O that thou *wert* as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! *when* I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.

I would lead thee, *and* bring thee into my mother's house, *who* would instruct me: I would

cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

His left hand *should be* under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, until he please.

Who *is* this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?

If she *be* a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she *be* a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.

I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.

Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

My vineyard, which *is* mine, *is* before me: thou, O Solomon, *must have* a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear *it*.

Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

NOVEMBER 28

NIÑO DIABLO*

THE wide pampas rough with long grass; a vast level disc now growing dark, the horizon encircling it with a ring as faultless as that made by a pebble dropped into smooth water; above it the clear sky of June, wintry and pale, still showing in the west the saffron hues of the afterglow tinged with vapory violet and grey. In the centre of the disc a large low rancho thatched with yellow rushes, a few stunted trees and cattle enclosures grouped about it; and dimly seen in the shadows, cattle and sheep reposing. At the gate stands Gregory Gorostiaga, lord of house, lands, and ruminating herds, leisurely unsaddling his horse; for whatsoever Gregory does is done leisurely. Although no person is within earshot he talks much over his task, now rebuking his restive animal, and now cursing his benumbed fingers and the hard knots in his gear. A curse falls readily and not without a certain natural grace from Gregory's lips; it is the oiled feather with which he touches every difficult knot encountered in life. From time to time he glances toward the open

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kitchen door, from which issue the far-flaring light of the fire and familiar voices, with savoury smells of cookery that come to his nostrils like pleasant messengers.

The unsaddling over at last the freed horse gallops away, neighing joyfully, to seek his fellows; but Gregory is not a four-footed thing to hurry himself; and so, stepping slowly and pausing frequently to look about him as if reluctant to quit the cold night air, he turns toward the house.

The spacious kitchen was lighted by two or three wicks in cups of melted fat, and by a great fire in the middle of the clay floor that cast crowds of dancing shadows on the walls and filled the whole room with grateful warmth. On the walls were fastened many deers' heads, and on their convenient prongs were hung bridles and lassos, ropes of onions and garlic, bunches of dried herbs, and various other objects. At the fire a piece of beef was roasting on a spit; and in a large pot suspended by hook and chain from the smoke-blackened central beam, boiled and bubbled an ocean of mutton broth, puffing out white clouds of steam redolent of herbs and cummin-seed. Close to the fire, skimmer in hand, sat Magdalen, Gregory's fat and florid wife, engaged in frying pies in a second smaller pot. There also, on a high, straight-backed chair, sat Ascension, her sister-in-law, a wrinkled spinster; also, in a low rush-bottomed seat, her mother-in-law, an ancient white-headed dame, staring vacantly into the flames. On the other side of the fire were Greg-

ory's two eldest daughters, occupied just now in serving *maté* to their elders—that harmless bitter decoction the sipping of which fills up all vacant moments from dawn to bed-time—pretty dove-eyed girls of sixteen, both also named Magdalen, but not after their mother nor because confusion was loved by the family for its own sake; they were twins, and born on the day sacred to Santa Magdalena. Slumbering dogs and cats were disposed about the floor, also four children. The eldest, a boy, sitting with legs outstretched before him, was cutting threads from a slip of colt's hide looped over his great toe. The two next, boy and girl, were playing a simple game called nines, once known to English children as nine men's morrice; the lines were rudely scratched on the clay floor, and the men they played with were bits of hardened clay, nine red and as many white. The youngest, a girl of five, sat on the floor nursing a kitten that purred contentedly on her lap and drowsily winked its blue eyes at the fire; and as she swayed herself from side to side she lisped out the old lullaby in her baby voice:

A-ro-ró mi niño
A-ro-ró mi sol,
A-ro-ró pedazos
De mi corazón.

Gregory stood on the threshold surveying this domestic scene with manifest pleasure.

"Papa mine, what have you brought me?" cried the child with the kitten.

"Brought you, interested? Stiff whiskers and cold hands to pinch your dirty little cheeks. How is your cold to-night, Mother?"

"Yes, son, it is very cold to-night; we knew that before you came in," replied the old dame testily as she drew her chair a little closer to the fire.

"It is useless speaking to her," remarked Ascension. "With her to be out of temper is to be deaf."

"What has happened to put her out?" he asked.

"I can tell you, papa," cried one of the twins. "She wouldn't let me make your cigars to-day, and sat down out-of-doors to make them herself. It was after breakfast when the sun was warm."

"And of course she fell asleep," chimed in Ascension.

"Let me tell it, auntie!" exclaimed the other. "And she fell asleep, and in a moment Rosita's lamb came and ate up the whole of the tobacco-leaf in her lap."

"It didn't!" cried Rosita, looking up from her game. "I opened its mouth and looked with all my eyes, and there was no tobacco-leaf in it."

"That lamb! that lamb!" said Gregory slily. "Is it to be wondered at that we are turning grey before our time—all except Rosita! Remind me to-morrow, wife, to take it to the flock; or if it has grown fat on all the tobacco-leaf, aprons and old shoes it has eaten——"

"Oh, no, no, no!" screamed Rosita, starting up and throwing the game into confusion, just when

her little brother had made a row and was in the act of seizing on one of her pieces in triumph.

"Hush, silly child, he will not harm your lamb," said the mother, pausing from her task and raising eyes that were tearful with the smoke of the fire and of the cigarette she held between her good-humoured lips. "And now, if these children have finished speaking of their important affairs, tell me, Gregory, what news do you bring?"

"They say," he returned, sitting down and taking the maté-cup from his daughter's hand, "that the invading Indians bring seven hundred lances, and that those that first opposed them were all slain. Some say they are now retreating with the cattle they have taken; while others maintain that they are waiting to fight our men."

"Oh, my sons, my sons, what will happen to them!" cried Magdalen, bursting into tears.

"Why do you cry, wife, before God gives you cause?" returned her husband. "Are not all men born to fight the infidel? Our boys are not alone —all their friends and neighbours are with them."

"Say not this to me, Gregory, for I am not a fool nor blind. All their friends indeed! And this very day I have seen the Niño Diablo; he galloped past the house, whistling like a partridge that knows no care. Why must my two sons be called away, while he, a youth without occupation and with no mother to cry for him, remains behind?"

"You talk folly, Magdalen," replied her lord. "Complain that the ostrich and puma are more favoured than your sons, since no man calls on

them to serve the state; but mention not the Niño, for he is freer than the wild things which Heaven has made, and fights not on this side nor on that."

"Coward! Miserable!" murmured the incensed mother.

Whereupon one of the twins flushed scarlet, and retorted, "He is not a coward, Mother!"

"And if not a coward why does he sit on the hearth among women and old men in times like these? Grieved am I to hear a daughter of mine speak in defence of one who is a vagabond and a stealer of other men's horses!"

The girl's eyes flashed angrily, but she answered not a word.

"Hold your tongue, woman, and accuse no man of crimes," spoke Gregory. "Let every Christian take proper care of his animals; and as for the infidel's horses, he is a virtuous man that steals them. The girl speaks truth; the Niño is no coward, but he fights not with our weapons. The web of the spider is coarse and ill-made compared with the snare he spreads to entangle his prey." Thus fixing his eyes on the face of the girl who had spoken, he added: "therefore be warned in season, my daughter, and fall not into the snare of the Niño Diablo."

Aagain the girl blushed and hung her head.

At this moment a clatter of hoofs, the jangling of a bell, and shouts of a traveller to the horses driven before him, came in at the open door. The dogs roused themselves, almost overturning the children in their hurry to rush out; and up rose

Gregory to find out who was approaching with so much noise.

"I know, *papita*," cried one of the children. "It is Uncle Polycarp."

"You are right, child," said her father. "Cousin Polycarp always arrives at night, shouting to his animals like a troop of Indians." And with that he went out to welcome his boisterous relative.

The traveller soon arrived, spurring his horse, scared at the light and snorting loudly, to within two yards of the door. In a few minutes the saddle was thrown off, the fore feet of the bell-mare fettered, and the horses allowed to wander away in quest of pasturage; then the two men turned into the kitchen.

A short, burly man aged about fifty, wearing a soft hat thrust far back on his head, with truculent greenish eyes beneath arched bushy eyebrows, and a thick shapeless nose surmounting a bristly moustache—such was Cousin Polycarp. From neck to feet he was covered with a blue cloth poncho, and on his heels he wore enormous silver spurs that clanked and jangled over the floor like the fetters of a convict. After greeting the women and bestowing the avuncular blessing on the children, who had clamored for it as for some inestimable boon—he sat down, and flinging back his poncho displayed at his waist a huge silver-hilted knife and a heavy brass-barrelled horse-pistol.

"Heaven be praised for its goodness, Cousin Magdalen," he said. "What with pies and spices your kitchen is more fragrant than a garden of

flowers. That's as it should be, for nothing but rum have I tasted this bleak day. And the boys are away fighting, Gregory tells me. Good! When the eaglets have found out their wings let them try their talons. What, Cousin Magdalen, crying for the boys! Would you have had them girls?"

"Yes, a thousand times," she replied, drying her wet eyes on her apron.

"Ah, Magdalen, daughters can't be always young and sweet-tempered, like your brace of pretty partridges yonder. They grow old, Cousin Magdalen—old and ugly and spiteful; and are more bitter and worthless than the wild pumpkin. But I speak now of those who are present, for I would say nothing to offend my respected Cousin Ascension, whom may God preserve, though she never married."

"Listen to me, Cousin Polycarp," returned the insulted dame so pointedly alluded to. "Say nothing to me nor of me, and I will also hold my peace concerning you; for you know very well that if I were disposed to open my lips I could say a thousand things."

"Enough, enough, you have already said them a thousand times," he interrupted. "I know all that, cousin; let us say no more."

"That is only what I ask," she retorted, "for I have never loved to bandy words with you; and you know already, therefore I need not recall it to your mind, that if I am single it is not because some men whose names I could mention if I felt

disposed—and they are the names not of dead but of living men—would not have been glad to marry me, but because I preferred my liberty and the goods I inherited from my father; and I see not what advantage there is in being the wife of one who is a brawler and a drunkard and spender of other people's money, and I know not what besides."

"There it is!" said Polycarp, appealing to the fire. "I knew that I had thrust my foot into a red ant's nest—careless that I am! But in truth, Ascension, it was fortunate for you in those distant days you mention that you hardened your heart against all lovers. For wives, like cattle that must be branded with their owner's mark, are first of all taught submission to their husbands; and consider, cousin, what tears! what sufferings!" And having ended thus abruptly, he planted his elbows on his knees and busied himself with the cigarette he had been trying to roll up with his cold drunken fingers for the last five minutes.

Ascension gave a nervous twitch at the red cotton kerchief on her head, and cleared her throat with a sound "sharp and short like the shrill swallow's cry," when——

"*Madre del Cielo,* how you frightened me!" screamed one of the twins, giving a great start.

The cause of this sudden outcry was discovered in the presence of a young man quietly seated on the bench at the girl's side. He had not been there a minute before, and no person had seen him enter the room—what wonder that the girl was startled!

He was slender in form and had small hands and feet, and oval olive face, smooth as a girl's except for the incipient moustache on his lip. In place of a hat he wore only a scarlet ribbon bound about his head, to keep back the glossy black hair that fell to his shoulders; and he was wrapped in a white woollen Indian poncho, while his lower limbs were cased in white coltskin coverings, shaped like stockings to his feet, with the red tassels of his embroidered garters falling to the ankles.

"The Niño Diablo!" all cried in a breath, the children manifesting the greatest joy at his appearance. But old Gregory spoke with affected anger. "Why do you always drop on us in this treacherous way, like rain through a leaky thatch?" he exclaimed. "Keep these strange arts for your visits in the infidel country; here we are all Christians, and praise God on the threshold when we visit a neighbour's house. And now, Niño Diablo, what news of the Indians?"

"Nothing do I know and little do I concern myself about specks on the horizon," returned the visitor with a light laugh. And at once all the children gathered round him, for the Niño they considered to belong to them when he came, and not to their elders with their solemn talk about Indian warfare and lost horses. And now, now he would finish that wonderful story, long in the telling, of the little girl alone and lost in the great desert, and surrounded by all the wild animals met to discuss what they should do with her. It was a grand story, even mother Magdalen listened,

though she pretended all the time to be thinking only of her pies—and the teller, like the grand old historians of other days, put most eloquent speeches, all made out of his own head, into the lips (and beaks) of the various actors—puma, ostrich, deer, cavy, and the rest.

In the midst of this performance supper was announced, and all gathered willingly round a dish of Magdalen's pies, filled with minced meat, hard-boiled eggs chopped small, raisins, and plenty of spice. After the pies came roast beef; and, finally, great basins of mutton broth fragrant with herbs and cummin-seed. The rage of hunger satisfied, each one said a prayer, the elders murmuring with bowed heads, the children on their knees uplifting shrill voices. Then followed the concluding semi-religious ceremony of the day, when each child in its turn asked a blessing of father, mother, grandmother, uncle, aunt, and not omitting the stranger within the gates, even the Niño Diablo of evil-sounding name.

The men drew forth their pouches, and began making their cigarettes, when once more the children gathered round the story-teller, their faces glowing with expectation.

"No, no," cried their mother. "No more stories to-night—to bed, to bed!"

"Oh, Mother, Mother!" cried Rosita pleadingly, and struggling to free herself; for the good woman had dashed in among them to enforce obedience. "Oh, let me stay till the story ends! The reed-cat

had said such things! Oh, what will they do with the poor little girl?"

"And oh, Mother mine!" drowsily sobbed her little sister; "the armadillo that said—that said nothing because it had nothing to say, and the partridge that whistled and said——" and here she broke into a prolonged wail. The boys also added their voices until the hubbub was no longer to be borne, and Gregory rose up in his wrath and called on someone to lend him a big whip; only then they yielded, and still sobbing and casting many a lingering look behind, were led from the kitchen.

During this scene the Niño had been carrying on a whispered conversation with the pretty Magdalen of his choice, heedless of the uproar of which he had been the indirect cause; deaf also to the bitter remarks of Ascension concerning some people who, having no homes of their own, were fond of coming uninvited into other people's houses, only to repay the hospitality extended to them by stealing their silly daughters' affections, and teaching their children to rebel against their authority.

But the noise and confusion had served to arouse Polycarp from a drowsy fit; for like a boa constrictor, he had dined largely after his long fast, and dinner had made him dull; bending toward his cousin he whispered earnestly: "Who is this young stranger, Gregory?"

"In what corner of the earth have you been hiding to ask who the Niño Diablo is?" returned the other.

"Must I know the history of every cat and dog?"

"The Niño is not cat nor dog, cousin, but a man among men, like a falcon among birds. When a child of six the Indians killed all his relations and carried him into captivity. After five years he escaped out of their hands, and, guided by sun and stars and signs of the earth, he found his way back to the Christian's country, bringing many beautiful horses stolen from his captors; also the name of Niño Diablo first given to him by the infidel. We know him by no other."

"This is a good story; in truth I like it well—it pleases me mightily," said Polycarp. "And what more, cousin Gregory?"

"More than I can tell, cousin. When he comes the dogs bark not—who knows why? his tread is softer than the cat's; the untamed horse is tame for him. Always in the midst of dangers, yet no harm, no scratch. Why? Because he stoops like the falcon, makes his stroke and is gone—Heaven knows where!"

"What strange things are you telling me? Wonderful! And what more, cousin Gregory?"

"He often goes into the Indian country and lives freely with the infidel, disguised, for they do not know him who was once their captive. They speak of the Niño Diablo to him, saying that when they catch that thief they will flay him alive. He listens to their strange stories, then leaves them, taking their finest ponchos and silver ornaments, and the flower of their horses."

"A brave youth, one after my own heart, cousin Gregory. Heaven defend and prosper him in all his journeys into the Indian territory! Before we part I shall embrace him and offer him my friendship, which is worth something. More, tell me more, cousin Gregory?"

"These things I tell you to put you on your guard; look well to your horses, cousin."

"What!" shouted the other, lifting himself up from his stooping posture, and staring at his relation with astonishment and kindling anger in his countenance.

The conversation had been carried on in a low tone, and the sudden loud exclamation startled them all—all except the Niño, who continued smoking and chatting pleasantly to the twins.

"Lightning and pestilence, what is this you say to me, Gregory Gorostiaga!" continued Polycarp, violently slapping his thigh and thrusting his hat farther back on his head.

"Prudence!" whispered Gregory. "Say nothing to offend the Niño, he never forgives an enemy —with horses."

"Talk not to me of prudence!" bawled the other. "You hit me on the apple of the eye and counsel me not to cry out. What! have not I, whom men call Polycarp of the South, wrestled with tigers in the desert, and must I hold my peace because of a boy—even a boy devil? Talk of what you like, cousin, and I am a meek man—meek as a sucking babe; but touch not on my horses, for then I am a whirlwind, a conflagration, a river flooded in

winter, and all wrath and destruction like an invasion of Indians! Who can stand before me? Ribs of steel are no protection! Look at my knife; do you ask why there are stains on the blade? Listen: because it has gone straight to the robber's heart!" And with that he drew out his great knife and flourished it wildly, and made stabs and slashes at an imaginary foe suspended above the fire.

The pretty girls grew silent and pale and trembled like poplar leaves; the old grandmother rose up, and clutching at her shawl toddled hurriedly away, while Ascension uttered a snort of disdain. But the Niño still talked and smiled, blowing thin smoke-clouds from his lips, careless of that tempest of wrath gathering before him; till, seeing the other so calm, the man of war returned his weapon to its sheath, and glancing round and lowering his voice to a conversational tone, informed his hearers that his name was Polycarp, one known and feared by all men—especially in the south; that he disposed to live in peace and amity with the entire human race, and he therefore considered it unreasonable of some men to follow him about the world asking him to kill them. "Perhaps," he concluded, with a touch of irony, "they think I gain something by putting them to death. A mistake, good friends; I gain nothing by it! I am not a vulture and their bodies can be of no use to me."

Just after this sanguinary protest and disclaimer the Niño all at once made a gesture as if to impose silence, and turning his face toward the door, his

nostrils dilating, and his eyes appearing to grow large and luminous like those of a cat.

"What do you hear, Niño?" asked Gregory.

"I hear lapwings screaming," he replied.

"Only a fox perhaps," said the other. "But go to the door, Niño, and listen."

"No need," he returned, dropping his hand, the light of a sudden excitement passing from his face. "'Tis only a single horseman riding this way at a fast gallop."

Polycarp got up and went to the door, saying that when a man was among robbers it behooved him to look well after his cattle. Then he came back and sat down again. "Perhaps," he remarked, with a side glance at the Niño, "a better plan would be to watch the thief. A lie, cousin Gregory; no lapwings are screaming; no single horseman approaching at a fast gallop. The night is serene, and earth as silent as the sepulchre."

"Prudence!" whispered Gregory again. "Ah, cousin, always playful like a kitten; when will you grow old and wise? Can you not see a sleeping snake without turning aside to stir it up with your naked foot?"

Strange to say, Polycarp made no reply. A long experience in getting up quarrels had taught him that these impassive men were, in truth, often enough like venomous snakes, quick and watchful in his manner.

All now were intently listening. Then said Gregory, "Tell us, Niño, what voices, fine as the trumpet of the smallest fly, do you hear coming from

that great silence? Has the mother skunk put her little ones to sleep in their kennel and gone out to seek for the pipit's nest? Have fox and armadillo met to challenge each other to fresh trials of strength and cunning? What is the owl saying this moment to his mistress in praise of her big green eyes?"

The young man smiled slightly but answered not; and for full five minutes more all listened, then sounds of approaching hoofs became audible. Dogs began to bark, horses to snort in alarm, and Gregory rose and went forth to receive the late night-wanderer. Soon he appeared, beating the angry barking dogs off with his whip, a white-faced, wild-haired man, furiously spurring his horse like a person demented or flying from robbers.

"Ave Maria!" he shouted aloud; and when the answer was given in suitable pious words, the scared-looking stranger drew near, and bending down, said: "Tell me, good friend, is one whom men call Niño Diablo with you; for to this house I have been directed in my search for him?"

"He is within, friend," answered Gregory. "Follow me and you shall see him with your own eyes. Only first unsaddle, so that your horse may roll before the sweat dries on him."

"How many horses have I ridden their last journey on this quest!" said the stranger, hurriedly pulling off the saddle and rugs. "But tell me one thing more: is he well—no indisposition? Has he met with no accident—a broken bone, a sprained ankle?"

"Friend," said Gregory, "I have heard that once in past times the moon met with an accident, but of the Niño no such thing has been reported to me."

With this assurance the stranger followed his host into the kitchen, made his salutation, and sat down by the fire. He was about thirty years old, a good-looking man, but his face was haggard, his eyes bloodshot, his manner restless, and he appeared like one half-crazed by some great calamity. The hospitable Magdalen placed food before him and pressed him to eat. He complied, although reluctantly, despatched his supper in a few moments, and murmured a prayer; then, glancing curiously at the two men seated near him, he addressed himself to the burly, well-armed, and dangerous-looking Polycarp. "Friend," he said, his agitation increasing as he spoke, "four days have I been seeking you, taking neither food nor rest, so great was my need of your assistance. You alone, after God, can help me. Help me in this strait, and half of all I possess in land and cattle and gold shall be freely given to you, and the angels above will applaud your deed!"

"Drunk or mad?" was the only reply vouchsafed to this appeal..

"Sir," said the stranger with dignity, "I have not tasted wine these many days, nor has my great grief crazed me."

"Then what ails the man?" said Polycarp. "Fear perhaps, for he is white in the face like one who has seen the Indians."

"In truth I have seen them. I was one of those unfortunates who first opposed them, and most of the friends who were with me are now food for wild dogs. Where our houses stood there are only ashes and a stain of blood on the ground. Oh, friend, can you not guess why you alone were in my thoughts when this trouble came to me—why I have ridden day and night to find you?"

"Demons!" exclaimed Polycarp, "into what quagmires would this man lead me? Once for all I understand you not! Leave me in peace, strange man, or we shall quarrel." And here he tapped his weapon significantly.

At this juncture, Gregory, who took his time about everything, thought proper to interpose. "You are mistaken, friend," said he. "The young man sitting on your right is the Niño Diablo, for whom you inquired a little while ago."

A look of astonishment, followed by one of intense relief, came over the stranger's face. Turning to the young man he said, "My friend, forgive me this mistake. Grief has perhaps dimmed my sight; but sometimes the iron blade and the blade of finest temper are not easily distinguished by the eye. When we try them we know which is the brute metal, and cast it aside to take up the other, and trust our life to it. The words I have spoken were meant for you, and you have heard them."

"What can I do for you, friend?" said the Niño.

"Oh, sir, the greatest service! You can restore my lost wife to me. The savages have taken her away into captivity. What can I do to save her—

I who cannot make myself invisible, and fly like the wind, and compass all things!" And here he bowed his head, and covering his face gave way to overmastering grief.

"Be comforted, friend," said the other, touching him lightly on the arm. "I will restore her to you."

"Oh, friend, how shall I thank you for these words!" cried the unhappy man, seizing and pressing the Niño's hand.

"Tell me her name—describe her to me."

"Torcuata is her name—Torcuata de la Rosa. She is one finger's width taller than this young woman," indicating one of the twins who was standing. "But not dark; her cheeks are rosy—no, no, I forget, they will be pale now, whiter than the grass plumes, with stains of dark colour under the eyes. Brown hair and blue eyes, but very deep blue. Look well, friend, lest you think them black and leave her to perish."

"Never!" remarked Gregory, shaking his head.

"Enough—you have told me enough, friend," said the Niño, rolling up a cigarette.

"Enough!" repeated the other, surprised. "But you do not know; she is my life; my life is in your hands. How can I persuade you to be with me? Cattle I have. I had gone to pay the herdsmen their wages when the Indians came unexpectedly; and my house at La Chilca, on the banks of the Langueyú, was burnt, and my wife taken away during my absence. Eight hundred head of cattle have escaped the savages, and half

of them shall be yours; and half of all I possess in money and land."

"Cattle!" returned the Niño, smiling, and holding a lighted stick to his cigarette. "I have enough to eat without molesting myself with the care of cattle."

"But I told you that I had other things," said the stranger full of distress.

The young man laughed, and rose from his seat.

"Listen to me," he said. "I go now to follow the Indians—to mix with them, perhaps. They are retreating slowly, burdened with much spoil. In fifteen days go to the little town of Tandil, and wait for me there. As for land, if God has given so much of it to the ostrich it is not a thing for a man to set a great value on." Then he bent down to whisper a few words in the ear of the girl at his side; and immediately afterward, with a simple "good-night" to the others, stepped lightly from the kitchen. By another door the girl also hurriedly left the room, to hide her tears from the watchful censuring eyes of mother and aunt.

Then the stranger, recovering from his astonishment at the abrupt ending of the conversation, started up, and crying aloud, "Stay! stay one moment—one word more!" rushed out after the young man. At some distance from the house he caught sight of the Niño, sitting motionless on his horse, as if waiting to speak to him.

"This is what I have to say to you," spoke the Niño, bending down to the other. "Go back to Langueyú, and rebuild your house, and expect me

there with your wife in about thirty days. When I bade you go to the Tandil in fifteen days, I spoke only to mislead that man Polycarp, who has an evil mind. Can I ride a hundred leagues and back in fifteen days? Say no words of this to any man. And fear not. If I fail to return with your wife at the appointed time take some of that money you have offered me, and bid a priest say a mass for my soul's repose; for eye of man shall never see me again, and the brown hawks will be complaining that there is no more flesh to be picked from my bones."

During this brief colloquy, and afterward, when Gregory and his women-folk went off to bed, leaving the stranger to sleep in his rugs beside the kitchen fire, Polycarp, who had sworn a mighty oath not to close his eyes that night, busied himself making his horses secure. Driving them home, he tied them to the posts of the gate within twenty-five yards of the kitchen door. Then he sat down by the fire and smoked and dozed, and cursed his dry mouth and drowsy eyes that were so hard to keep open. At intervals of about fifteen minutes he would get up and go out to satisfy himself that his precious horses were still safe. At length in rising, some time after midnight, his foot kicked against some loud-sounding metal object lying beside him on the floor, which an examination proved to be a copper bell of a peculiar shape, and curiously like the one fastened to the neck of his bell-mare. Bell in hand, he stepped to the door and put out his head, and lo! his horses were no longer at the gate!

Eight horses: seven iron-grey geldings, every one of them swift and sure-footed, sound as the bell in his hand, and as like each other as seven claret-coloured eggs in the tinamou's nest; and the eighth, the gentle piebald mare—the *madrina* his horses loved and would follow to the world's end, now, alas! with a thief on her back! Gone—gone!

He rushed out, uttering a succession of frantic howls and imprecations, and finally, to wind up the performance, dashed the now useless bell with all his energy against the gate, shattering it into a hundred pieces. Oh, that bell, how often and how often in how many a wayside public-house had he boasted, in his cups and when sober, of its mellow, far-reaching tone—the sweet sound that assured him in the silent watches of the night that his beloved steeds were safe! Now he danced on the broken fragments, digging them into the earth with his heel; now in his frenzy, he could have dug them up again to grind them to powder with his teeth!

The children turned restlessly in bed, dreaming of the lost little girl in the desert; and the stranger half awoke, muttering, "Courage, O Torcuata—let not your heart break. . . . Soul of my life, he gives you back to me—on my bosom, *rosa fresca, rosa fresca!*" Then the hands unclenched themselves again, and the muttering died away. But Gregory woke fully, and instantly divined the cause of the clamour. "Magdalen! Wife!" he said. "Listen to Polycarp; the Niño has paid him out for his insolence! Oh, fool, I warned him, and

he would not listen!" But Magdalen refused to wake; and so, hiding his head under the coverlet, he made the bed shake with suppressed laughter, so pleased was he at the clever trick played on his blustering cousin. All at once his laughter ceased, and out popped his head again, showing in the dim light a somewhat long and solemn face. For he had suddenly thought of his pretty daughter asleep in the adjoining room. Asleep! Wide awake, more likely, thinking of her sweet lover, brushing the dews from the hoary pampas grass in his southward flight, speeding away into the heart of the vast mysterious wilderness. Listening also to her uncle, the desperado, apostrophising the midnight stars; while with his knife he excavates two deep trenches, three yards long and intersecting each other at right angles—a scared symbol on which he intends, when finished, to swear a most horrible vengeance. "Perhaps," muttered Gregory, "the Niño has still other pranks to play in this house."

When the stranger heard next morning what had happened he was better able to understand the Niño's motive in giving him that caution overnight; nor was he greatly put out, but thought it better that an evil-minded man should lose his horses than that the Niño should set out badly mounted on such an adventure.

"Let me not forget," said the robbed man, as he rode away on a horse borrowed from his cousin, "to be at the Tandil this day fortnight, with a sharp knife and a blunderbuss charged with a

handful of powder and not fewer than twenty-three slugs."

Terribly in earnest was Polycarp of the South. He was there at the appointed time, slugs and all; but the smooth-cheeked, mysterious, child-devil came not; nor stranger still, did the scared-looking de la Rosa come clattering in to look for his lost Torcuata. At the end of the fifteenth day de la Rosa was at Langueyú seventy-five miles from the Tandil, alone in his new rancho, which had just been rebuilt with the aid of a few neighbours. Through all that night he sat alone by the fire, pondering many things. If he could only recover his lost wife, then he would bid a long farwell to that wild frontier and take her across the great sea, and to that old tree-shaded stone farmhouse in Andalusia, which he had left a boy, and where his aged parents still lived, thinking no more to see their wandering son. His resolution was taken; he would sell all he possessed, all except a portion of land in the Langueyú with the house he had just rebuilt; and to the Niño Diablo, the deliverer, he would say, "Friend, though you despise the things that others value, take this land and poor house for the sake of the girl Magdalen you love; for then perhaps her parents will no longer deny her to you."

He was still thinking of these things when a dozen or twenty military starlings—that cheerful scarlet-breasted songster of the lonely pampas—alighted on the thatch outside, and warbling their gay, careless winter-music told him that it was day.

And all day long, on foot and on horseback, his thoughts were of his lost Torcuata; and when evening once more drew near his heart was sick with suspense and longing; and climbing the ladder placed against the gable of his rancho he stood on the roof gazing westward into the blue distance. The sun, crimson, and large, sunk into the great green sea of grass, and from all the plain rose the tender fluting notes of the tinamou-partridges, bird answering bird. "Oh, that I could pierce the haze with my vision," he murmured, "that I could see across a hundred leagues of level plain, and look this moment on your sweet face, Torcuata!"

And Torcuata was in truth a hundred leagues distant from him at that moment; and if the miraculous sight he wished for had been given, this was what he would have seen. A wide barren plain scantily clothed with yellow tufts of grass and thorny shrubs, and at its southern extremity, shutting out the view of that side, a low range of dune-like hills. Over this level ground, toward the range, moves a vast herd of cattle and horses—fifteen or twenty thousand head—followed by a scattered horde of savages armed with their long lances. In a small compact body in the centre ride the captives, women and children. Just as the red orb touches the horizon the hills are passed, and lo! a wide grassy valley beyond, with flocks and herds pasturing, and scattered trees, and the blue gleam of water from a chain of small lakes! There full in sight is the Indian settlement, the smoke rising peacefully up from the clustered huts.

At the sight of home the savages burst into loud cries of joy and triumph, answered, as they drew near, with piercing screams of welcome from the village population, chiefly composed of women, children, and old men.

It is past midnight; the young moon has set; the last fires are dying down; the shouts and loud noise of excited talk and laughter have ceased, and the weary warriors, after feasting on sweet mare's flesh to repletion, have fallen asleep in their huts, or lying out-of-doors on the ground. Only the dogs are excited still and keep up an incessant barking. Even the captive women, huddled together in one hut in the middle of the settlement, fatigued with their long rough journey, have cried themselves to sleep at last.

At length one of the sad sleepers wakes, or half wakes, dreaming that someone has called her name. How could such a thing be? Yet her own name still seems ringing in her brain, and at length, fully awake, she finds herself intently listening. Again it sounded—"Torcuata"—a voice fine as the pipe of a mosquito, yet so sharp and distinct that it tingled in her ear. She sat up and listened again, and once more it sounded, "Torcuata!" "Who speaks?" she returned in a fearful whisper. The voice, still fine and small, replied: "Come out from among the others until you touch the wall." Trembling she obeyed, creeping out from among the sleepers until she came into contact with the side of the hut. Then

the voice sounded again, "Creep round the wall until you come to a small crack of light on the other side." Again she obeyed, and when she reached the line of faint light it widened quickly to an aperture, through which a shadowy arm was passed round her waist; and in a moment she was lifted up and saw the stars above her, and at her feet dark forms of men wrapped in their ponchos lying asleep. But no one woke, no alarm was given; and in a very few minutes she was mounted, man-fashion, on a barebacked horse, speeding swiftly over the dim plains, with the shadowy form of her mysterious deliverer some yards in advance, driving before him a score or so of horses. He had only spoken half-a-dozen words to her since their escape from the hut but she knew by those words that he was taking her to Langueyú.

W. H. HUDSON.

NOVEMBER 29

(Louisa May Alcott, born November 29, 1832)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

[He is a hard-hearted churl who can read with unmoistened eyes this journal of a brave and talented girl.

With what genuine, *personal* pleasure one remembers that a full measure of success and recognition was finally won by her efforts.]

*1852.—*High Street, Boston.*—After the small-pox summer, we went to a house in High Street. Mother opened an intelligence office, which grew out of her city missionary work and a desire to find places for good girls. It was not fit work for her, but it paid; and she always did what came to her in the work of duty or charity, and let pride, taste, and comfort suffer for love's sake.

Anna and I taught; Lizzie was our little housekeeper—our angel in a cellar kitchen; May went to school; father wrote and talked when he could get classes or conversations. Our poor little home had much love and happiness in it, and it was a shelter for lost girls, abused wives, friendless children, and weak or wicked men. Father

*From "Louisa May Alcott: Her Life, Letters, and Journals." Little, Brown & Co., 1889.

and mother had no money to give, but gave them time, sympathy, help; and if blessings would make them rich, they would be millionaires. This is practical Christianity.

My first story was printed, and $5 paid for it. It was written in Concord when I was sixteen. Great rubbish! Read it aloud to sisters, and when they praised it, not knowing the author, I proudly announced her name.

Made a resolution to read fewer novels, and those only of the best. List of books I like:

Carlyle's French Revolution and Miscellanies.
Hero and Hero-Worship.
Goethe's poems, plays, and novels.
Plutarch's Lives.
Madame Guion.
Paradise Lost and Comus.
Schiller's Plays.
Madame de Staël.
Bettine.
Louis XIV.
Jane Eyre.
Hypatia.
Philothea.
Uncle Tom's Cabin.
Emerson's Poems. . . .

1853.—In January I started a little school—E. W., W. A., two L's, two H's—about a dozen in our parlor. In May, when my school closed, I went to L. as second girl. I needed the change, could do the wash, and was glad to earn my

$2 a week. Home in October with $34 for my wages. After two days' rest, began school again with ten children. Anna went to Syracuse to teach; father to the West to try his luck—so poor, so hopeful, so serene. God be with him! Mother had several boarders, and May got on well at school. Betty was still the home bird, and had a little romance with C.

Pleasant letters from father and Anna. A hard year. Summer distasteful and lonely; winter tiresome with school and people I didn't like. I miss Anna, my one bosom friend and comforter.

1854.—Pinckney Street.—I have neglected my journal for months, so must write it up. School for me month after month. Mother busy with boarders and sewing. Father doing as well as a philosopher can in a money-loving world. Anna at S.

I earned a good deal by sewing in the evening when my day's work was done.

In February father came home. Paid his way, but no more. A dramatic scene when he arrived in the night. We were waked by hearing the bell. Mother flew down, crying "My husband!" We rushed after, and five white figures embraced the half-frozen wanderer who came in hungry, tired, cold, and disappointed, but smiling bravely and as serene as ever. We fed and warmed and brooded over him, longing to ask if he had made any money; but no one did till little May said, after he had told all the pleasant

things, "Well, did people pay you?" Then, with a queer look, he opened his pocketbook and showed one dollar, saying with a smile that made our eyes fill, "Only that! My overcoat was stolen, and I had to buy a shawl. Many promises were not kept, and travelling is costly; but I have opened the way, and another year shall do better."

I shall never forget how beautifully mother answered him, though the dear, hopeful soul had built much on his success; but with a beaming face she kissed him, saying, "I call that doing *very well.* Since you are safely home, dear, we don't ask anything more."

Anna and I choked down our tears, and took a little lesson in real love, which we never forgot, nor the look that the tired man and the tender woman gave one another. It was half tragic and comic, for father was very dirty and sleepy, and mother in a big nightcap and funny old jacket.

[I began to see the strong contrasts and the fun and follies in every day-life about this time —L. M. A.]

Anna came home in March. Kept our school all summer. I got "Flower Fables" ready to print.

Louisa also tried service with a relative in the country for a short time, but teaching, sewing, and writing were her principal occupations during this residence in Boston.

These seven years, from Louisa's sixteenth to her twenty-third year, might be called an

apprenticeship to life. She tried various paths, and learned to know herself and the world about her, although she was not even yet certain of success in the way which finally opened before her and led her so successfully to the accomplishment of her life-purpose. She tried teaching, without satisfaction to herself or perhaps to others. The kind of education she had herself received fitted her admirably to understand and influence children, but not to carry on the routine of a school. Sewing was her resource when nothing else offered, but it is almost pitiful to think of her as confined to such work when great powers were lying dormant in her mind. Still Margaret Fuller said that a year of enforced quiet in the country devoted mainly to sewing was very useful to her, since she reviewed and examined the treasures laid up in her memory; and doubtless Louisa Alcott thought out many a story which afterward delighted the world while her fingers busily plied the needle. Yet it was a great deliverance when she first found that the products of her brain would bring in the needed money for family support.

[*L. in Boston to A. in Syracuse*]

Thursday, 27th.

DEAREST NAN: I was so glad to hear from you, and hear that all are well.

I am grubbing away as usual, trying to get money enough to buy mother a nice warm shawl. I have eleven dollars, all my own earnings—five

for a story, and four for the pile of sewing I did for the ladies of Dr. Gray's society, to give him as a present.

. . . I got a crimson ribbon for a bonnet for May, and I took my straw and fixed it nicely with some little duds I had. Her old one has haunted me all winter, and I want her to look neat. She is so graceful and pretty and loves beauty so much it is hard for her to be poor and wear other people's ugly things. You and I have learned not to mind *much;* but when I think of her I long to dash out and buy the finest hat the limited sum of ten dollars can procure. She says so sweetly in one of her letters: "It is hard sometimes to see other people have so many nice things and I so few; but I try not to be envious, but content with my poor clothes, and cheerful about it." I hope the little dear will like the bonnet and the frills I made her and some bows I fixed over from bright ribbons L. W. threw away. I get half my rarities from her rag-bag, and she doesn't know her own rags when fixed over. I hope I shall live to see the dear child in silk and lace, with plenty of pictures and "bottles of cream," Europe, and all she longs for.

For our good little Betty, who is wearing all the old gowns we left, I shall soon be able to buy a new one, and send it with my blessing to the cheerful saint. She writes me the funniest notes, and tries to keep the old folks warm and make the lonely house in the snowbanks cosey and bright.

To father I shall send new neckties and some paper; then he will be happy, and can keep on with the beloved diaries though the heavens fall.

Don't laugh at my plans; I'll carry them out, if I go to service to do it. Seeing so much money flying about, I long to honestly get a little and make my dear family more comfortable. I feel weak-minded when I think of all they need and the little I can do.

Now about you: Keep the money you have earned by so many tears and sacrifices, and clothe yourself; for it makes me mad to know that my good little lass is going round in shabby things, and being looked down upon by people who are not worthy to touch her patched shoes or the hem of her ragged old gowns. Make yourself tidy, and if any is left over send it to mother; for there are always many things needed at home, though they won't tell us. I only wish I, too, by any amount of weeping and homesickness could earn as much. But my mite won't come amiss; and if tears can add to its value, I've shed my quart—first, over the book not coming out; for that was a sad blow, and I waited so long it was dreadful when my castle in the air came tumbling about my ears. Pride made me laugh in public; but I wailed in private, and no one knew it. The folks at home think I rather enjoyed it, for I wrote a jolly letter. But my visit was spoiled; and now I'm digging away for dear life, that I may not have come entirely in vain. I didn't mean to groan about it; but my lass and

I must tell some one our trials, and so it becomes easy to confide in one another. I never let mother know how unhappy you were in S. till Uncle wrote.

My doings are not much this week. I sent a little tale to the *Gazette*, and Clapp asked H. W. if five dollars would be enough. Cousin H. said yes, and gave it to me, with kind words and a nice parcel of paper, saying in his funny way, "Now, Lu, the door is open, go in and win." So I shall try to do it. Then cousin L. W. said Mr. B. had got my play, and told her that if Mrs. B. liked it as well, it must be clever, and if it didn't cost too much, he would bring it out by and by. Say nothing about it yet. Dr. W. tells me Mr. F. is very sick; so the farce cannot be acted yet. But the Doctor is set on its coming out, and we have fun about it. H. W. takes me often to the theatre when L. is done with me. I read to her all the P.M. often, as she is poorly, and in that way I pay my debt to them.

I'm writing another story for Clapp. I want more fives, and mean to have them, too.

Uncle wrote that you were Dr. W.'s pet teacher, and every one loved you dearly. But if you are not well, don't stay. Come home, and be cuddled by your old LU.

Pinckney Street, Boston, January 1, 1855.— The principal event of the winter is the appearance of my book "Flower Fables." An edition of sixteen hundred. It has sold very well, and

people seem to like it. I feel quite proud that the little tales that I wrote for Ellen E. when I was sixteen should now bring money and fame.

I will put in some of the notices as "varieties," mothers are always foolish over their first-born.

Miss Wealthy Stevens paid for the book, and I received $32.

[A pleasing contrast to the receipts of six months only, in 1886, being $8,000 for the sale of books, and no new one; but I was prouder over the $32 than the $8,000.—L. M. A., 1886.]

April, 1855.—I am in the garret with my papers round me, and a pile of apples to eat while I write my journal, plan stories, and enjoy the patter of rain on the roof, in peace and quiet.

[Jo in the garret.—L. M. A.]

Being behindhand, as usual, I'll make note of the main events up to date, for I don't waste ink in poetry and pages of rubbish now. I've begun to *live*, and have no time for sentimental musing.

In October I began my school; father talked, mother looked after her boarders, and tried to help everybody. Anna was in Syracuse teaching Mrs. S——'s children.

My book came out; and people began to think that topsy-turvy Louisa would amount to something after all, since she could do so well as housemaid, teacher, seamstress, and story-teller. Perhaps she may.

In February I wrote a story for which C. paid $5 and asked for more.

In March I wrote a farce for W. Warren, and Dr. W. offered it to him; but W. W. was too busy.

Also began another tale, but found little time to work on it, with school, sewing, and housework. My winter's earnings are:

School, one quarter	$50
Sewing	50
Stories	20

if I am ever paid.

A busy and a pleasant winter, because, though hard at times, I do seem to be getting on a little; and that encourages me.

Have heard Lowell and Hedge lecture, acted in plays, and thanks to our rag-money and good cousin H., have been to the theatre several times—always my great joy.

Summer plans are yet unsettled. Father wants to go to England: not a wise idea, I think. We shall probably stay here, and A. and I go into the country as governesses. It's a queer way to live, but dramatic, and I rather like it; for we never know what is to come next. We are real "Micawbers," and always "ready for a spring."

I have planned another Christmas book, and hope to be able to write it.

1855.—Cousin L. W. asks me to pass the summer at Walpole with her. If I can get no teaching, I shall go; for I long for the hills, and can write my fairy tales there.

I delivered my burlesque lecture on "Woman, and Her Position; by Oronthy Bluggage," last evening at Deacon G's. Had a merry time, and was asked by Mr. R. to do it at H. for money. Read "Hamlet" at our club—my favorite play. Saw Mrs. W. H. Smith about the farce; says she will do it at her benefit.

May.—Father went to C. to talk with Mr. Emerson about the England trip. I am to go to Walpole. I have made my own gowns, and had money enough to fit up the girls. So glad to be independent.

[I wonder if $40 fitted up the whole family. Perhaps so, as my wardrobe was made up of old clothes from cousins and friends.—L. M. A.]

Walpole, N. H., June, 1855.—Pleasant journey and a kind welcome. Lovely place, high among the hills. So glad to run and skip in the woods and up the splendid ravine. I Shall write here, I know.

Helped cousin L. in her garden; and the smell of the fresh earth and the touch of green leaves did me good.

Mr. T. came and praised my first book, so I felt much inspired to go and do another. I remember him at Scituate years ago, when he was a young shipbuilder and I a curly-haired hoyden of five or six.

Up at five, and had a lovely run in the ravine, seeing the woods wake. Planned a little tale which ought to be fresh and true, as it came at that hour and place—"King Goldenrod." Have

lively days—writing in A.M., driving in P.M., and fun in the eve. My visit is doing me much good.

July, 1855.—Read "Hyperion." On the 16th the family came to live in Mr. W's. house, rent free. No better plan offered, and we were all tired of the city. Here father can have a garden, mother can rest and be near her good niece; the children have freedom and fine air; and A. and I can go from here to our teaching, wherever it may be.

Busy and happy times as we settle in the little house in the lane near by my dear ravine—plays, picnics, pleasant people, and good neighbors. Fanny Kemble came up, Mrs. Kirkland, and others, and Dr. Bellows is the gayest of the gay. We acted the "Jacobite," "Rivals," and "Bonnycastles," to an audience of a hundred, and were noticed in the Boston papers. H. T. was our manager, and Dr. B., D. D., our dramatic director. Anna was the star, her acting being really very fine. I did "Mrs. Malaprop," "Widow Pottle," and the old ladies.

Finished fairy book in September. Ann had an offer from Dr. Wilbur of Syracuse to teach at the great idiot asylum. She disliked it, but decided to go. Poor dear! so beauty-loving, timid, and tender. It is a hard trial; but she is so self-sacrificing she tries to like it because it is duty.

October.—A. to Syracuse. May illustrated my book and tales called "Christmas Elves." Better

than "Flower Fables." Now I must try to sell it.

[Innocent Louisa, to think that a Christmas book could be sold in October.—L. M. A.]

November.—Decided to seek my fortune; so with my little trunk of home-made clothes, $20 earned by stories sent to the *Gazette,* and my MSS., I set forth with mother's blessing one rainy day in the dullest month in the year.

[My birth-month; always to be a memorable one.—L. M. A.]

Found it too late to do anything with the book, so put it away and tried for teaching, sewing, or any honest work. Won't go home to sit idle while I have a head and pair of hands.

December.—H. and L. W. very kind, and my dear cousins the Sewalls take me in. I sew for Mollie and others, and write stories. C. gave me books to notice. Heard Thackeray. Anxious times; Anna very homesick. Walpole very cold and dull now the summer butterflies have gone. Got $5 for a tale and $12 for sewing; sent home a Christmas box to cheer the dear souls in the snow-banks.

January, 1856.—C. paid $6 for "A Sister's Trial." Gave me more books to notice, and wants more tales.

[Should think he would at that price.—L. M. A.]

Sewed for L. W. Sewall and others. Mr. J. M. Field took my farce to Mobile to bring out; Mr. Barry of the Boston Theatre has the play.

Heard Curtis lecture. Began a book for summer—"Beach Bubbles." Mr. F. of the

Courier printed a poem of mine on "Little Nell." Got $10 for "Bertha," and saw great yellow placards stuck up announcing it. Acted at the W.'s.

March.—Got $10 for "Genevieve." Prices go up, as people like the tales and ask who wrote them. Finished "Twelve Bubbles." Sewed a great deal, and got very tired; one job for Mr. G. of a dozen pillow cases, one dozen sheets, six fine cambric neckties, and two dozen handkerchiefs, at which I had to work all one night to get them done, as they were a gift to him. I got only $4.

Sewing won't make my fortune; but I can plan my stories while I work, and then scribble 'em down on Sundays.

Poem on "Little Paul"; Curtis's lecture on "Dickens" made it go well. Hear Emerson on "England."

May.—Anna came on her way home, sick and worn out; the work was too much for her. We had some happy days visiting about. Could not dispose of B. B. in book form, but C. took them for his paper. Mr. Field died, so the farce fell through there. Altered the play for Mrs. Barrow to bring out next winter.

June, 1856.—Home, to find dear Betty very ill with scarlet-fever caught from some poor children mother nursed when they fell sick, living over a cellar where pigs had been kept. The landlord (a deacon) would not clean the place till mother threatened to sue him for allowing a nuisance.

Too late to save two of the poor babies or Lizzie and May from the fever.

[L. never recovered, but died of it two years later.—L. M. A.]

An anxious time, I nursed, did housework, and wrote a story a month through the summer.

Dr. Bellows and father had Sunday eve conversations.

October.—Pleasant letters from father, who went on a tour to New York, Philadelphia, and Boston.

Made plans to go to Boston for the winter, as there is nothing to do here, and there I can support myself and help the family. C. offers $10 a month, and perhaps more. L. W., M. S., and others, have plenty of sewing; the play *may* come out, and Mrs. R. will give me a sky-parlor for $3 a week, with fire and board. I sew for her also.

If I can get A. L. to governess I shall be all right.

I was born with a boy's spirit under my bib and tucker. I *can't wait* when I *can work*, so I took my little talent in my hand and forced the world again, braver than before and wiser for my failures.

[Jo in N. Y.—L. M. A.]

I don't often pray in words; but when I set out that day with all my worldly goods in the little old trunk, my own earnings ($25) in my pocket, and much hope and resolution in my soul, my heart was very full, and I said to the Lord, "Help us all, and keep us for one another," as I

never said it before, while I looked back at the dear faces watching me, so full of love and hope and faith.

[*Journal*]

Boston, November, 1856: *Mrs. David Reed's.*—I find my little room up in the attic very cosey and a house full of boarders very amusing to study. Mrs. Reed very kind. Fly around and take C. his stories. Go to see Mrs. L. about A. Don't want me. A blow, but I cheer up and hunt for sewing. Go to hear Parker, and he does me good. Asks me to come Sunday evenings to his house. I did go there, and met Phillips, Garrison, Hedge, and other great men, and sit in my corner weekly, staring and enjoying myself.

When I went Mr. Parker said, "God bless you, Louisa; come again"; and the grasp of his hand gave me courage to face another anxious week.

November 3d.—Wrote all the morning. In the P.M. went to see the Sumner reception as he comes home after the Brooks affair. I saw him pass up Beacon Street, pale and feeble, but smiling and bowing. I rushed to Hancock Street, and was in time to see him bring his proud old mother to the window when the crowd gave three cheers for her. I cheered, too, and was very much excited. Mr. Parker met him somewhere before the ceremony began, and the above P. cheered like a boy; and Sumner laughed and nodded as his friend pranced and shouted, bareheaded and beaming.

My kind cousin, L. W., got tickets for a course

of lectures on "Italian Literature," and seeing my old cloak sent me a new one, with other needful and pretty things such as girls love to have. I shall never forget how kind she has always been to me.

November 5th.—Went with H. W. to see Manager Barry about the everlasting play which is always coming out but never comes. We went all over the great new theatre, and I danced a jig on the immense stage. Mr. B. was very kind, and gave me a pass to come whenever I liked. This was such richness I didn't care if the play was burnt on the spot, and went home full of joy. In the eve I saw La Grange as Norma, and felt as if I knew all about that place. Quite stage-struck, and imagined myself in her place, with white robes and oak-leaf crown.

November 6th.—Sewed happily on my job of twelve sheets for H. W., and put lots of good will into the work after his kindness to me.

Walked to Roxbury to see cousin Dr. W. about the play and tell the fine news. Rode home in the new cars, and found them very nice.

In the eve went to teach at Warren Street Charity School. I'll help as I am helped if I can. Mother says no one so poor he can't do a little for some one poorer yet.

Sunday.—Heard Parker on "Individuality of Character," and liked it much. In the eve I went to his house. Mrs. Howe was there, and Sumner and others. I sat in my usual corner, but Mr. P. came up and said, in that cordial way

of his, "Well, child, how goes it?" "Pretty well, sir." "That's brave"; and with his warm handshake he went on, leaving me both proud and happy, though I have my trials. He is like a great fire where all can come and be warmed and comforted. Bless him!

Had a talk at tea about him, and fought for him when W. R. said he was not a Christian. He is my *sort;* for though he may lack reverence for other people's God, he works bravely for his own, and turns his back on no one who needs help, as some of the pious do.

Monday, 14th.—May came full of expectation and joy to visit good aunt B. and study drawing. We walked about and had a good home talk, then my girl went off to Auntie's to begin what I hope will be a pleasant and profitable winter. She needs help to develop her talent, and I can't give it to her.

Went to see Forrest as Othello. It is funny to see how attentive all the once cool gentlemen are to Miss Alcott now she has a pass to the new theatre.

November 29th.—My birthday. Felt forlorn so far from home. Wrote all day. Seem to be getting on slowly, so should be contented. To a little party at the B.'s in the eve. May looked very pretty, and seemed to be a favorite. The boys teased me about being an authoress, and I said I'd be famous yet. Will if I can, but something else may be better for me.

Found a pretty pin from father and a nice letter

when I got home. Mr. H. brought them with letters from mother and Betty, so I went to bed happy.

December.—Busy with Christmas and New Year's tales. Heard a good lecture by E. P. Whipple on "Courage." Thought I needed it, being rather tired of living like a spider—spinning my brains out for money.

Wrote a story, "The Cross on the Church Tower," suggested by the tower before my window.

Called on Mrs. L., and she asked me to come and teach A. for three hours each day. Just what I wanted; and the children's welcome was very pretty and comforting to "Our Olly," as they called me.

Now board is all safe, and something over for home, if stories and sewing fail. I don't do much, but can send little comforts to mother and Betty, and keep May neat.

December 18th.—Begin with A. L., in Beacon Street. I taught C. when we lived in High Street, A. in Pinckney Street, and now Al., so I seem to be an institution and a success, since I can start the boy, teach one girl, and take care of the little invalid. It is hard work, but I can do it; and am glad to sit in a large, fine room part of each day, after my sky-parlor, which has nothing pretty in it, and only the gray tower and blue sky outside as I sit at the window writing. I love luxury, but freedom and independence better.

[*To Her Father, Written from Mrs. Reed's*]

Boston, November 29, 1856.

DEAREST FATHER: Your little parcel was very welcome to me as I sat alone in my room, with snow falling fast outside, and a few tears in (for birthdays are dismal times to me); and the fine letter, the pretty gift, and, most of all, the loving thought so kindly taken for your old absent daughter, made the cold, dark day as warm and bright as summer to me.

And now, with the birthday pin upon my bosom, many thanks on my lips, and a whole heart full of love for its giver, I will tell you a little about my doings, stupid as they will seem after your own grand proceedings. How I wish I could be with you, enjoying what I have always longed for—fine people, fine amusements, and fine books. But as I can't, I am glad you are; for I love to see your name first among the lecturers, to hear it kindly spoken of in papers and inquired about by good people here—to say nothing of the delight and pride I take in seeing you at last filling the place you are so fitted for, and which you have waited for so long and patiently. If the New Yorkers raise a statue to the modern Plato, it will be a wise and highly creditable action.

. . . . . .

I am very well and very happy. Things go smoothly, and I think I shall come out right, and prove that though an *Alcott* I *can* support

myself. I like the independent feeling; and though not an easy life, it is a free one, and I enjoy it. I can't do much with my hands; so I will make a battering-ram of my head and make a way through this rough-and-tumble world. I have very pleasant lectures to amuse my evenings—Professor Gajani on "Italian Reformers," the Mercantile Library course, Whipple, Beecher, and others, and, best of all, a free pass at the Boston Theatre. I saw Mr. Barry, and he gave it to me with many kind speeches, and promises to bring out the play very soon. I hope he will.

My farce is in the hands of Mrs. W. H. Smith, who acts at Laura Keene's theatre in New York. She took it, saying she would bring it out there. If you see or hear anything about it, let me know. I want something doing. My mornings are spent in writing. C. takes one a month, and I am to see Mr. B., who may take some of my wares.

In the afternoons I walk and visit my hundred relations, who are all kind and friendly, and seem interested in our various successes.

Sunday evenings I go to Parker's parlor, and there meet Phillips, Garrison, Scherb, Sanborn, and many other pleasant people. All talk, and I sit in a corner listening, and wishing a certain placid, gray-haired gentleman was there talking, too. Mrs. Parker calls on me, reads my stories, and is very good to me. Theodore asks Louisa "how her worthy parents do," and is otherwise very friendly to the large, bashful girl who adorns his parlor steadily.

Abby is preparing for a busy and, I hope, a profitable winter. She has music lessons already, French and drawing in store, and, if her eyes hold out, will keep her word and become what none of us can be, "an accomplished Alcott." Now, dear father, I shall hope to hear from you occasionally, and will gladly answer all epistles from the Plato, whose parlor parish is becoming quite famous. I got the *Tribune* but not the letter, and shall look it up. I have been meaning to write, but did not know where you were.

Good-bye, and a happy birthday from your ever-loving child, LOUISA.

[*Journal*]

January, 1857.—Had my first new silk dress from good little L. W., very fine; and I felt as if all the Hancocks and Quincys beheld me as I went to two parties in it on New Year's eve.

A busy, happy month—taught, wrote, sewed, read aloud to the "little mother," and went often to the theatre; heard good lectures; and enjoyed my Parker evenings very much.

Father came to see me on his way home; little money; had had a good time, and was asked to come again. Why don't rich people who enjoy his talk pay for it? Philosophers are always poor, and too modest to pass round their own hats.

Sent by him a good bundle to the poor Forlornites among the ten-foot drifts in W.

February.—Ran home as a valentine on the 14th.

March.—Have several irons in the fire now, and try to keep 'em all hot.

April.—May did a crayon head of mother with Mrs. Murdock; very good likeness. All of us as proud as peacocks of our "little Raphael."

Heard Mrs. Butler read; very fine.

May.—Left the L.'s with my $33; glad to rest. May went home with her picture, happy in her winter's work and success.

Father had three talks at W. F. Channing's. Good company—Emerson, Mrs. Howe, and the rest.

Saw young Booth in Brutus, and liked him better than his father; went about and rested after my labors; glad to be with father, who enjoyed Boston and friends.

Home on the 10th, passing Sunday at the Emersons'. I have done what I planned—supported myself, written eight stories, taught four months, earned a hundred dollars, and sent money home.

THE GARDENS OF PLEASURE*

SHE walked upon the beds, and the sweet rich scent arose; and she gathered her hands full of flowers. Then Duty, with his white clear features, came and looked at her. Then she ceased from gathering, but she walked away among the flowers, smiling, and with her hands full.

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*From "Dreams," by Olive Schreiner, by permission of Little, Brown & Co.

Then Duty, with his still white face, came again, and looked at her; but she, she turned her head away from him. At last she saw his face, and she dropped the fairest of the flowers she had held, and walked silently away.

Then again he came to her. And she moaned, and bent her head low, and turned to the gate. But as she went out she looked back at the sunlight on the faces of the flowers, and wept in anguish. Then she went out, and it shut behind her for ever; but still in her hand she held of the buds she had gathered, and the scent was very sweet in the lonely desert.

But he followed her. Once more he stood before her with his still, white, death-like face. And she knew what he had come for: she unbent the fingers, and let the flowers drop out, the flowers she had loved so, and walked on without them, with dry, aching eyes. Then for the last time he came. And she showed him her empty hands, the hands that held nothing now. But still he looked. Then at length she opened her bosom and took out of it one small flower she had had hidden there, and laid it on the sand. She had nothing more to give now, and she wandered away, and the grey sand whirled about her.

OLIVE SCHREINER.

IN A FAR-OFF WORLD*

THERE is a world in one of the far-off stars, and things do not happen here as they happen there.

In that world were a man and woman; they had one work, and they walked together side by side on many days, and were friends—and that is a thing that happens now and then in this world also.

But there was something in that star-world that there is not here. There was a thick wood: where the trees grew closest, and the stems were interlocked, and the summer sun never shone, there stood a shrine. In the day all was quiet, but at night, when the stars shone or the moon glinted on the tree-tops, and all was quiet below, if one crept here quite alone and knelt on the steps of the stone altar, and uncovering one's breast, so wounded it that the blood fell down on the altar steps, then whatever he who knelt there wished for was granted him. And all this happens, as I said, because it is a far-off world, and things often happen there as they do not happen here.

Now, the man and woman walked together; and the woman wished well to the man. One night when the moon was shining so that the leaves of all the trees glinted, and the waves of the sea were silvery, the woman walked alone to the forest. It was dark there; the moonlight fell

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*From "Dreams," by Olive Schreiner, by permission of Little, Brown, & Co

only in little flecks on the dead leaves under her feet, and the branches were knotted tight overhead. Farther in it got darker, not even a fleck of moonlight shone. Then she came to the shrine; she knelt down before it and prayed; there came no answer. Then she uncovered her breast; with a sharp two-edged stone that lay there she wounded it. The drops dripped slowly down on to the stone, and a voice cried, "What do you seek?"

She answered, "There is a man; I hold him dearer than anything. I would give him the best of all blessings."

The voice said, "What is it?"

The girl said, "I know not, but that which is most good for him I wish him to have."

The voice said, "Your prayer is answered; he shall have it."

Then she stood up. She covered her breast and held the garment tight upon it with her hand, and ran out of the forest, and the dead leaves fluttered under her feet. Out on the moonlight the soft air was blowing, and the sand glittered on the beach. She ran along the smooth shore, then suddenly she stood still. Out across the water there was something moving. She shaded her eyes and looked. It was a boat; it was sliding swiftly over the moonlit water out to sea. One stood upright in it; the face the moonlight did not show, but the figure she knew. It was passing swiftly; it seemed as if no one propelled it; the moonlight's shimmer did not let her see clearly,

and the boat was far from shore, but it seemed almost as if there was another figure sitting in the stern. Faster and faster it glided over the water away, away. She ran along the shore; she came no nearer it. The garment she had held closed fluttered open; she stretched out her arms, and the moonlight shone on her long loose hair.

Then a voice beside her whispered, "What is it?"

She cried, "With my blood I bought the best of all gifts for him. I have come to bring it him! He is going from me!"

The voice whispered softly: "Your prayer was answered. It has been given him."

She cried, "What is it?"

The voice answered, "It is that he might leave you."

The girl stood still.

Far out at sea the boat was lost to sight beyond the moonlight sheen.

The voice spoke softly, "Art thou contented?"

She said, "I am contented."

At her feet the waves broke in long ripples softly on the shore.

OLIVE SCHREINER.

NOVEMBER 30

THE SEA

THE sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions 'round;
It plays with the clouds; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the sea! I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be;
With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence wheresoe'er I go;
If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter? *I* shall ride and sleep.

I love (Oh! *how* I love) to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon,
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the south-west blasts do blow.

I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I loved the great sea more and more,

And backwards flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest;
And a mother she *was*, and *is*, to me;
For I was born on the open sea!

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcomed to life the ocean-child!

I've lived since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers, a sailor's life,
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
But never have sought nor sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he come to me,
Shall come on the wild, unbounded sea!

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER.

A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

"O for a soft and gentle wind!"
I hear a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE

A LIFE on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep;
Where the scattered waters rave,
And the winds their revels keep!
Like an eagle caged I pine
On this dull, unchanging shore:
O, give me the flashing brine,
The spray and the tempest's roar!

Once more on the deck I stand,
Of my own swift-gliding craft:
Set sail! farewell to the land;
The gale follows fair abaft.

We shoot through the sparkling foam,
  Like an ocean-bird set free,—
Like the ocean-bird, our home
  We'll find far out on the sea.

The land is no longer in view,
  The clouds have begun to frown;
But with a stout vessel and crew,
  We'll say, Let the storm come down!
And the song of our hearts shall be,
  While the winds and the waters rave,
A home on the rolling sea!
  A life on the ocean wave!

EPES SARGENT.

THE DISAPPOINTED LOVER*

I WILL go back to the great sweet mother—
  Mother and lover of men, the Sea.
I will go down to her, I and none other,
  Close with her, kiss her, and mix her with me;
Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast.
O fair white mother, in days long past
Born without sister, born without brother,
  Set free my soul as thy soul is free.

O fair green-girdled mother of mine,
  Sea, that art clothed with the sun and the rain,
Thy sweet hard kisses are strong like wine;
  Thy large embraces are keen like pain.

*From "The Triumph of Time."

Save me and hide me with all thy waves,
Find me one grave of thy thousand graves,
Those pure cold populous graves of thine,—
Wrought without hand in a world without stain.

I shall sleep, and move with the moving ships,
Change as the winds change, veer in the tide;
My lips will feast on the foam of thy lips,
I shall rise with thy rising, with thee subside;
Sleep, and not know if she be, if she were,—
Filled full with life to the eyes and hair,
As a rose is full filled to the rose-leaf tips
With splendid summer and perfume and pride.

This woven raiment of nights and days,
Were it once cast off and unwound from me,
Naked and glad would I walk in thy ways,
Alive and aware of thy waves and thee;
Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,
Clothed with the green, and crowned with the foam,
A pulse of the life of thy straits and bays,
A vein in the heart of the streams of the Sea.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

THE SEA GYPSY

I AM fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her topsails shot with fire,
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again to-morrow!
With the sunset I must be
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the sea.

RICHARD HOVEY.

SEA FEVER

I MUST go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant
gipsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the
wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fel-
low-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the
long trick's over.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the Straits;—on the French coast, the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window; sweet is the night air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the ebb meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand.
Begin and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THE INCHCAPE ROCK

NO STIR in the air, no stir in the sea,—
The ship was as still as she could be;
Her sails from heaven received no motion:
Her keel was steady in the ocean.

Without either sign or sound of their shock,
The waves flowed over the Inchcape rock;
So little they rose, so little they fell,
They did not move the Inchcape bell.

The holy Abbot of Aberbrothok
Had placed that bell on the Inchcape rock;
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the rock was hid by the surge's swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous rock,
And blessed the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

The sun in heaven was shining gay,—
All things were joyful on that day;
The sea-birds screamed as they wheeled around,
And there was joyance in their sound.

The buoy of the Inchcape bell was seen,
A darker speck on the ocean green;
Sir Ralph, the rover, walked his deck,
And he fixed his eye on the darker speck.

He felt the cheering power of spring,—
It made him whistle, it made him sing;
His heart was mirthful to excess;
But the rover's mirth was wickedness.

His eye was on the bell and float:
Quoth he, "My men, put out the boat;
And row me to the Inchcape rock,
And I'll plague the priest of Aberbrothok."

The boat is lowered, the boatmen row,
And to the Inchcape rock they go;
Sir Ralph bent over from the boat,
And cut the warning bell from the float.

Down sank the bell with a gurgling sound;
The bubbles rose, and burst around.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "The next who comes to the rock
Will not bless the Abbot of Aberbrothok."

Sir Ralph, the rover, sailed away,—
He scoured the seas for many a day;
And now, grown rich with plundered store,
He steers his course to Scotland's shore.

So thick a haze o'erspreads the sky
They cannot see the sun on high;
The wind hath blown a gale all day;
At evening it hath died away.

On the deck the rover takes his stand;
So dark it is they see no land.
Quoth Sir Ralph, "It will be lighter soon,
For there is the dawn of the rising moon."

"Canst hear," said one, "the breakers roar?
For yonder, methinks, should be the shore.
Now where we are I cannot tell,
But I wish we could hear the Inchcape bell."

They hear no sound; the swell is strong;
Though the wind hath fallen, they drift along;
Till the vessel strikes with a shivering shock,—
O Christ! it is the Inchcape rock!

Sir Ralph, the rover, tore his hair;
He cursed himself in his despair.
The waves rush in on every side;
The ship is sinking beneath the tide.

But ever in his dying fear
One dreadful sound he seemed to hear,—
A sound as if with the Inchcape bell
The Devil below was ringing his knell.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

THE SEA*

THERE is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but nature more,

*From "Childe Harold," Canto IV.

From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean,—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin,—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take

Of lord of thee and arbiter of war,—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee;
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts: not so thou;
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkles on thine azure brow;
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed,—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving; boundless, endless, and sublime,
The image of Eternity,—the throne
Of the Invisible! even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward; from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers,—they to me

Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror, 'twas a pleasing fear;
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane,—as I do here.

LORD BYRON.

END OF VOLUME XXII